

## Interview with Geoffrey W. Chapman

The Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training Foreign Affairs Oral History Project

GEOFFREY W. CHAPMAN

Interviewed by: Charles Stuart Kennedy

Initial interview date: March 18, 2005

Copyright 2006 ADST

*Q: Today is the 18th of March 2005. This is an interview with Geoffrey W. Chapman. This is being done on behalf of the Association of Diplomatic Studies and Training, and I'm Charles Stuart Kennedy. Do you go by Geoff?*

CHAPMAN: Geoff, that's right, yes.

*Q: And I imagine you have lots of trouble with spelling your name, I'm sure.*

CHAPMAN: Occasionally.

*Q: Ok, well...*

CHAPMAN: Though less now than I used to have, actually.

*Q: Well, let's start at the beginning, where you were born...*

CHAPMAN: Well, I have somewhat of an unusual background. I was born in England on June 23, 1942. I can explain the circumstances, if you would like. I was born, a British citizen, in a small town called Bedford, just north of London. My family actually came from a town called Eastbourne in Sussex, in the southern part of the country. But they'd

## Library of Congress

been evacuated during the war to an area further from the coast. The family returned to Eastbourne at the end of the war, but then both my father and mother died in 1948, and my sister and I were orphans for a while at an orphanage in Dorset, in southwestern England. Then we were adopted by an American couple in 1949, and came to this country.

*Q: All right, well lets just pick up a little...did you know much about your family, your birth family?*

CHAPMAN: I was only five years old when my parents died, but in subsequent years I have picked up some information, particularly from cousins in England, one of whom has done a fair amount of research into the family. So, I do know a little bit about my mother's side, but virtually nothing about my father's side.

*Q: What was the family name?*

CHAPMAN: The family name was Williams. My father was a Welshman, this was his second marriage, and he was a good 42 years older than my mother.

*Q: Oh my God.*

CHAPMAN: My mother died of colon cancer at the age of 40, and my father died just two months afterwards of a cerebral hemorrhage. I think it was probably the strain of taking care of two very young children at that advanced age, while trying to run his own business.

*Q: What type of business was he in?*

CHAPMAN: He was a fishmonger. He had a small fish shop just below the apartment we lived in.

*Q: Well then, do you know how the adoption came about?*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: My adoptive mother was English-born. She took charge of the adoption, and went to what was then called the Church of England Adoption Society and requested the particulars of any children they had up for adoption. They were looking for a brother and sister, and I think we were the first brother and sister they came across or the right ages or whatever it might be; so we got selected.

*Q: How long were you in the orphanage?*

CHAPMAN: Barely ten months, I think it was.

*Q: Do you recall the orphanage's name?*

CHAPMAN: I remember very little of it. It certainly wasn't Dickensian. I mean this was 1948-49. It was a relatively well-run orphanage in a pleasant small town on the south coast of England, in the county of Dorset. I remember getting out exercising, going for walks in the countryside. I hadn't been used to a comfortable upbringing; my family being very poor. I remember the food was sufficient, at least, and there were plenty of other kids our age.

*Q: —muffled question—*

CHAPMAN: Well I was used to it. It wasn't exactly gourmet. The only concrete recollection I have about the food is that the orphanage got one bottle of orange juice per week, and one of the children used to have to go to a shop in the village once a week to pick it up. The glass bottle must have been this high...

*Q: Oh, about a foot high, eh?*

CHAPMAN: ...and as a five year-old I carried this thing very carefully down the road about half a mile back to the orphanage. That was how strained the circumstances were in England after World War II. One bottle of orange juice per week for some twenty little children.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Well then in '48, you went to...where did you go in the United States?*

CHAPMAN: March of '49 to Boston.

*Q: With, I take it, the Chapmans.*

CHAPMAN: Right, yes.

*Q: Could you talk a bit about the Chapmans?*

CHAPMAN: We had a nice townhouse on Beacon Hill in Boston, smack in the middle of the city; one block below the famous Louisburg Square. My father was from a fairly distinguished family; one of his ancestors being the Founding Father John Jay. John Jay II, the grandson, was a diplomat for a while, Minister to Vienna, as well as a lifelong abolitionist. There was a strong abolitionist tradition on both sides of the family, both the Jay side (John Jay himself and his son, William Jay, and then John Jay II) and on the Chapman side, as well. Maria Weston Chapman, my father's great-grandmother, was a lifelong collaborator with William Lloyd Garrison in Boston. The Chapmans were a Boston family from way back, although my father's father, the essayist John Jay Chapman, was a lifelong New York resident.

*Q: Yes, extremely well known.*

CHAPMAN: Well, he wasn't terribly well known at the time. He was eccentric. He wrote some very good stuff on Emerson and was very close with Henry James, Walt Whitman, and other well-known writers of the era.

*Q: How was life, before we move to school, in the family?*

CHAPMAN: My father was in fact old enough to be my grandfather, in his early fifties when I was a mere six-year-old. He had served in the Navy in World War I, had returned to Harvard afterwards to get his degree, and had then gone on to Oxford for a couple of

## Library of Congress

years, where his roommate at Oxford was Lester Pearson, who was later Prime Minister of Canada. He went on to get a doctorate at the Sorbonne in Paris in Byzantine history, and then became a headmaster of a school in France at a school for the sons of American diplomats and businessmen living in Europe. The school folded after a couple of years so he founded another school of his own, which didn't last very long either. He came back to this country in the late '30s and had a series of jobs, although no real profession, apart from that of a scholar generally, because there was a lot of family money on both sides. He then got very involved in the conservation and was one of the founders of the Nature Conservancy, later serving as its President. That was his principal focus into his late seventies.

*Q: How about on your mother's side?*

CHAPMAN: My mother was English-born and had been what the English call a governess in her early adult years. She married my father after they had known each other for just a few months in 1937, and then came to this country. She never became Americanized and kept all her English traditions and her English accent. I still have a bit of that accent.

*Q: I was going to say, for a child of five...I won't say terribly pronounced but your accent...*

CHAPMAN: Well, there's more to it than that, but obviously being around my mother much of the time was a major influence on me, obviously. She did some teaching on the side, but didn't have a full-time occupation of her own.

*Q: Well then, how about life at home; one thinks that that area of Boston is sort of an intellectual center of...were there discussions around the table of things going on?*

CHAPMAN: Well, I don't remember much about our table discussions in the early fifties. In subsequent years, I would say there was only a limited amount of intellectual discussion. We differed a lot because at that point I was fairly liberal; while he was extremely conservative. So, we often just didn't talk about issues we knew that we would disagree

## Library of Congress

quite violently on sometimes. There were occasionally some interesting guests in for dinner. My father had done a fair amount of travel in the Middle East back in the 1930s and considered himself a bit of an Arabist, and I know was quite active in the late 40s and early 50s trying to provide support for the Palestinians. But it wasn't a household where there were constant discussions going on, no, that just wasn't the case. Maybe I missed a lot of discussions because I was whisked off to a boarding school at the age of eight in the fall of 1950.

*Q: Where did you go?*

CHAPMAN: Initially my parents looked around at some boarding schools in their area, but then thought that boarding schools in Canada would be better. They put me down for Rothesay School in New Brunswick, but since the school had a minimum admission age of nine I went off to another school in Nova Scotia for a year. I then transferred to Rothesay but was pulled out of there after a single semester, the reasons for which I don't remember. The family then went over to England on a visit in the spring of 1952, and my parents decided to put me in school there. So, I was actually at school in England from the summer of 1952 to the summer of 1960. First at what the English called a prep school, until I was 12 years old, and then what they call a public school, in Essex, until I was just 18.

*Q: What was the prep school like, Geoff, how did you find it?*

CHAPMAN: It wasn't a difficult transition for me because all of the all the changes I had lived through already in losing my parents, being adopted, moving here from another country. And there weren't any really close family bonds. So it was never difficult for me to go to boarding school. It was fairly Spartan, you might say; again food-rationing still existed in England at that point in 1952. There was a fairly rigorous academic curriculum and a lot of sports. You couldn't leave the campus on your own. It was a regimented life, but that was to be expected, that was the norm.

## Library of Congress

*Q: And public school, where did you go?*

CHAPMAN: A school called Felsted in Essex. Again, it was a pretty Spartan place: rigorous academically, sports, uniforms, had to be in bed by a certain time; it was a regimented life.

*Q: Was this public school one of the sort of... pointing towards public service or the military or something like that?*

CHAPMAN: As I recall there was no particular effort to educate students for public service in any form or fashion. Some did go into public service; but most went into private business.

*Q: What courses particularly did you enjoy and what ones didn't you enjoy?*

CHAPMAN: The system there took you through a very varied curriculum until about the age of 16. From the age of 16 to 18 you were considered to be preparing for university, so you specialized in two or three subjects. I specialized in history and French language and literature. I was not very good in mathematics or anything scientific. I did not enjoy ancient Greek, which I studied for a couple of years, although Latin I handled quite easily.

*Q: For social life...I take it young ladies were not a part of your life?*

CHAPMAN: No, the school did not turn co-ed in the 1970s. There was one dance a year to which young ladies were invited, and that was basically it.

*Q: I went to a prep school in New England, which was run by Episcopalian monks, and we had one dance a year but that was only for seniors. I know what you mean.*

CHAPMAN: Similar. Which one was that?

*Q: Called Kent.*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: Oh yeah, I know of it.

*Q: Of course, that meant that we were running around trying to find dates around Christmastime and during the summer and all, but most of the time it was pretty austere. How about reading; any particular areas that you [read] for your own recreation?*

CHAPMAN: You mean back at that time when I was in high school?

*Q: Yeah.*

CHAPMAN: I honestly don't recall very much. I probably didn't read much extra during the school year because there was so much homework to do. During the summertime I generally read novels and historical biographies, but nothing particular of jumps out at me at this point.

*Q: Was there any effort by anyone to bring you up to speed on American history?*

CHAPMAN: No, I did no American history, and actually I did none in college either.

*Q: You graduated from public school when?*

CHAPMAN: 1960.

*Q: 1960. Did you know what you were going to do or what you were going to be? You know, as an American-British...*

CHAPMAN: Well, I had actually become a naturalized American citizen in 1957. So, I guess at that point the thinking was that I would spend my life here in this country. I think both my father and I were agreed that it would be good to come back here to college. So I ended up at Bowdoin College in Maine for four years. I found that a very difficult transition, going from an English environment to an American college. I really was much more English than American, at that point.



## Library of Congress

*Q: Well, I would imagine so.*

CHAPMAN: I knew nobody. American customs were sort of foreign to me, in a way. The curriculum I had followed in public school was very different from a high school curriculum in the last few years. So, the first semester was a very difficult adjustment period for me.

*Q: Why Bowdoin?*

CHAPMAN: I was attracted to the idea of a small liberal arts college, from what research I'd done on it. My father and his father and grandfather....

*Q: I was going to say...either you were a little bit like John Adams...*

CHAPMAN: Had gone to Harvard, but he was very down on Harvard at that point, and said, "If you want to go to Harvard, I won't pay for it". So, scratch that one off. Yes, I was attracted to places like Williams, Amherst, Bowdoin, Wesleyan...

*Q: I went to Williams.*

CHAPMAN: What class were you in?

*Q: Class of '50.*

CHAPMAN: I can't recall exactly why I chose Bowdoin.

*Q: Did you have to make the adjustment yourself or was there any help or did you understand how you were out of sync with everybody?*

CHAPMAN: Well, it was basically an adjustment I made on my own. I don't want to over-emphasize how difficult it was; it just took a little time. Socially I was just not accustomed to the kind of life at a college like that. Academically I was faced with a need for a math requirement; and I hadn't done any math in two years or more. Here I was, sitting down

## Library of Congress

with calculus, and wondering what it was all about. I hadn't done any science in a long time. Some courses, such as history, seemed so simple, so straightforward, so elementary compared to what I'd been doing in England. I had some professors whom I got to know well during that first year, and a few of them were very helpful and especially solicitous towards me, but basically it was something I worked out on my own.

*Q: Did you find that history was still your thing?*

CHAPMAN: I think I more or less went in with the idea of majoring in history, and I did ultimately.

*Q: Any particular area of history?*

CHAPMAN: European history. I didn't take an American history courses at all.

*Q: Did you find yourself coming up short on...?*

CHAPMAN: I had to do American history in graduate school. But at Bowdoin it was all European (various stages), Russian history, special subjects in European history.

*Q: Did you find American college life pretty wild or different?*

CHAPMAN: Bowdoin had a reputation as a party school. But I did not join a fraternity; largely because my father would not allow it. His philosophy was that you go to college to study, not there to party. So I didn't. Bowdoin was a very small college back in those days. I think the total student body numbered just over 800, and only about 20 students were not fraternity members. The twenty of us ate together in the cafeteria and socialized together a bit, but it wasn't obviously the full experience you get with fraternity social life. Basically, I spent most of my time studying: I played on the soccer team for four years and did some radio broadcasting and a few other extra-curricular activities.

*Q: Well, did you find yourself tuning into American political life and...?*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: Oh yeah, certainly within the year or so.

*Q: Did you find...you said your father was particularly quite conservative and you became quite liberal, did you find yourself in the...? You were there during the Kennedy period, right?*

CHAPMAN: Not that much. I was coming into this relatively new, and I didn't have the experience of someone who had lived through the Eisenhower period in this country to see what the change was and the sense of a new beginning. To a certain degree, I picked that up and was a part of it. And my father was a very strong Goldwater supporter, and he would leave all of his Goldwater books in my room at home, hoping that I would read them. I actually never did.

*Q: Was there any particular political thrust to the faculty at Bowdoin at the time?*

CHAPMAN: It wasn't a time of great political ferment on campuses, and certainly not at Bowdoin. I don't recall much in the way of political controversy at the time.

*Q: It was after McCarthy and before...*

CHAPMAN: Before Vietnam, right. So, in '63 we were just getting involved in Vietnam, and there was no real controversy at that point. I don't recall any professors who stood out as being either at one extreme or the other; most of them seemed to be politically middle-of-the-road. I don't recall any major student issues that would have divided the student body. It was a relatively quiescent time politically on campus.

*Q: Where did the young men find the young ladies at Bowdoin?*

CHAPMAN: Well, usually from the Boston area. It was quite a ways off. I got to know some from friends I'd made at college there, sisters or friends of theirs. A few I'd met incidentally in the area.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Where's your sister? What was her course of education?*

CHAPMAN: She was a couple years older than myself. She similarly had gone to school in England, but had no ambition to go to college and trained as a nurse in Edinburgh. Then she got married after finishing her nursing course.

*Q: While you were at college, did you feel yourself pointed towards anything particularly?*

CHAPMAN: In my senior year I was strongly tempted to go to law school. I had taken a course in international law at Bowdoin and had enjoyed it tremendously. I seem to recall getting an A+ in the course. The professor who taught the course was pushing me to go to law school, but I had done most of my studying in history and the professor whom I was closest with was pushing me to go to graduate school in history. So I came to the decision to study history at graduate school and probably go on to teach it and to write in that field.

*Q: Where did you go to grad school?*

CHAPMAN: Princeton.

*Q: Princeton. And why there?*

CHAPMAN: Because I wanted to study under a particular professor, Robert Palmer, who, as it turned out, decided to accept the deanship at Washington University in St. Louis literally two weeks after I had signed on to go to Princeton. Palmer was a renowned authority on the French Revolution and on 18th century and 19th century French and European history generally. The history department overall was considered the best in the country at that point. There were some really fine people in a whole series of fields.

*Q: Well then, you went to Princeton from '64 to...?*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: I was at in Princeton from '64 to '68, then spent two years in the military and went back to Princeton in 1970-71 to finish up my dissertation and to teach part-time.

*Q: So, you had four years at Princeton, '64 to '68, what were you specializing in?*

CHAPMAN: My field of specialization was European history from the mid-19th century to early twentieth; but I covered other areas as well such as Russian and Soviet history. There were two very fine professors in the latter field: James Billington, who is now Librarian of Congress, and Cyril Black. I also did a fair amount of American history as well.

*Q: What did your studies center on? Did you come up with a dissertation in '64?*

CHAPMAN: Yes, I wrote a dissertation. I spent a year doing research in Paris and in Rome; although I didn't choose the subject for those two cities.

*Q: Well, one has to do what one has to do.*

CHAPMAN: That's right, indeed. It was in fact quite tough doing historical research in Paris, at least in the area of the contemporary or modern history of France. As of 1967, some categories of archival records were closed after 1815 and virtually nothing was available after 1914.

*Q: Well, I think that I have tried to get a connection with the French Foreign Service doing oral history like this. We have a sister program going with the British Foreign Service, but I despair about the French, and having something like this.*

CHAPMAN: I found as well that a lot of French statesmen and politicians would simply destroy their papers upon leaving office, or instruct their heirs to do so. Maybe they felt there was incriminating evidence in there, or some things they would not want out in public over the next 50 or 100 years. Very few would write their memoirs, and if they did they were very exculpatory, revealing little about the key controversial issues that they were

## Library of Congress

involved in. So, it was a difficult environment for a historian, but I worked through that, and Italy was quite the opposite. Things were so open there it was unbelievable, and largely because they were on the wrong side in World War II. Practically everything up to the end of the Fascist period was open. So, my dissertation was basically on domestic politics in those two countries on the eve of World War I, posing the question how the state of domestic politics conditioned the decisions made in 1914 in the international crisis of July.

*Q: One of the things, its not quite on the subject, but something I've had quoted to me and I've used it, was on the eve of 1914 and of World War I, in all of the correspondence and discussions that went back and forth, the United States wasn't mentioned at all.*

CHAPMAN: That's true, no mention.

*Q: Well, when you were in France, you were there before the '68...?*

CHAPMAN: Les evenements, yes, before then. I was in Paris from January of '67 through end of July '67, and then I went to Rome for the rest of the year until January of '68.

*Q: Did you get any feel for the rest of [the] student body or you were pretty much doing your thing?*

CHAPMAN: Well, I was pretty much doing my own thing. My advisor at Princeton had a contact he gave me at La Sorbonne, a well-known historian of international relations. I went to him to get pointers and thoughts as to where I should go next, but basically I made my own way to the National Archives, the Bibliotheque National, and other archival collections around town. I picked up the names of other scholars working in the area and found out more from them. I did not have that much involvement with the Sorbonne as such. I was over there a lot on the Left Bank, and frequently used to eat there and just wander around. It was the exciting place to be in town.

*Q: Oh yeah. Well then, you got caught up in the draft.*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: No, not drafted. I went through ROTC in college so I had a two-year active-duty commitment which I was able to postpone for four years, up until the summer of '68.

*Q: What happened on the military side?*

CHAPMAN: My commission was in intelligence...

*Q: Which branch of the service?*

CHAPMAN: I was in the Army, and it was standard practice for intelligence officers to start with the basic infantry officer's course at Fort Benning. I was at Benning in July and August, suffering through the unbearable heat and humidity. But then rather than being given a regular line assignment, I was assigned to a junior faculty position at the National War College. General Goodpaster, then the commandant, wanted to give the War College more of an academic bent that it had at the time. It had no teaching faculty of its own and no research component; the faculty were basically administering rather than teaching. So Goodpaster was looking for young academics to come in and start a research program there at the National War College, and my name was put forward by a Princeton colleague who had been recruited for a similar program at the Industrial College of the Armed Forces next door. So, I spent my active-duty years in the military (two years) at the National War College.

*Q: This was, of course, from '68 to '70, when the height of our involvement in Vietnam...how did that reflect, when looking at it, on the military as they were training? There must have been a lot of programs about this, wasn't there or not? At the War College, people wondering, questioning...?*

CHAPMAN: Do you mean questioning our commitment, our policy?

*Q: Our commitment, on how things were going, yeah.*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: There really wasn't. The student body were military officers at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel and Colonel who were not, at that stage, sticking their necks out to question policy. They were focused on their military careers; what it takes to get ahead, what it takes to make General rank. There was some review of the history of the French-Vietnamese conflict in the '50s, but I don't recall any free-flowing discussion of the merits of American involvement in Vietnam. I don't think that was the cast of the military mind at that point. I don't remember much in the way of questioning of our policy on the part of Foreign Service people attending the College, although I was certainly not with them all of the time.

*Q: Well, what were you doing?*

CHAPMAN: Goodpaster had in fact left the College just before I got there.

*Q: For Vietnam?*

CHAPMAN: That's right. He had been at the National War College only on a temporary assignment, to recuperate from a heart attack or some health problem. The general who replaced him as commandant really didn't know what to do with this research unit that Goodpaster had created. For a while the four of us in the unit were left to our own devices to come up with issues that we felt needed researching and doing some work on them. We then started working on curriculum materials, largely case studies on international crises that we would then put before the students in their discussion groups.

*Q: In the course of this and prior to this when you were doing your research and all, did diplomacy as a career...?*

CHAPMAN: I think that's when it first really came to my mind, when I was at the National War College. I did interact with quite a few of the mid-career Foreign Service officers who were attending the War College. I traveled a couple of times with War College groups overseas, once to the Middle East and once to the Far East. I met a lot of embassy people



## Library of Congress

my age in the capitals we visited. So, that's what got me thinking more about a career in Foreign Service, as opposed to teaching. When I finished military service and went back to Princeton to write my dissertation and teach part-time for a year, I had both teaching and diplomacy in mind as career tracks. I went through the laborious process of looking for a teaching job, sitting for numerous interviews and writing scores of letters, and was offered a teaching job in Michigan. At the same time, I took the written Foreign Service exam and then went on to the oral. In the spring of 1971 I had to make a decision and eventually came out in favor of the Foreign Service, with the thought being that if it didn't work out, I had my PhD and I could go back and get a teaching job.

*Q: When you took the oral exam, do you recall any of the questions or anything...?*

CHAPMAN: I remember there was an examining panel of three, chaired by Bill Woessner. Bill was a German-hand, and this was an eventful period in Germany with the Brandt government having come into power in '69 and the negotiations on the Quadripartite agreement underway. I recall having being told that the best preparation for the foreign service exam and for the oral was just to read the New York Times thoroughly for a year, which is what I had done, focusing on foreign news. So I had read quite a lot about what was going on in Germany and in the Berlin negotiations, and I remember getting into some long conversations with Bill Woessner on those subjects. Melissa Wells, another member of the panel, asked me a few questions about economics and about the European community. It was over faster than I thought it would be; it went very smoothly, and I don't remember there being any difficult moments at all.

*Q: You came in when?*

CHAPMAN: September 1971.

*Q: I was wondering— had you thought about the academic life? Because many people who come into the Foreign Service, they looked hard at the academic life and the*

## Library of Congress

*academic politics and all, and that sort of turned them off. Did you have any feel for that before?*

CHAPMAN: No, I don't think academic politics turned me off. I think what turned me in the favor of a foreign service rather academic career was more a sense that I wasn't ready for a more contemplative existence in an academic community somewhat divorced from the real world. I wanted to go out and do something more active and become a participant in events, rather than study them and teach them and think about them. I think I was looking for a more active professional life rather than the contemplative existence of the scholar.

*Q: Had a significant other developed at this point or not?*

CHAPMAN: Yes, I was actually married in graduate school, back in '65.

*Q: What's the background of your wife?*

CHAPMAN: I'd met her in California. Her father was a Congregational minister; her mother was a professional violinist. She had just finished college, and we had met through mutual friends in California.

*Q: So you were married when you came into the Foreign Service?*

CHAPMAN: Yes.

*Q: What was your basic officer's course like? What sort of composition, what sort of field did you pick when you came in '71?*

CHAPMAN: My recollection is that it was short and superficial, really. I don't think it is anything like the way it is now. We had a series of outside speakers, basically hitting the substantive issues of the moment. I remember an off-site out in West Virginia. The whole course went very quickly, and it did not make that much of an impression on me.

## Library of Congress

*Q: No. How about the young officers; did they make any impression on you?*

CHAPMAN: We were a young and eager bunch, mostly in our mid- to late-twenties. Practically all of us had done graduate work and had considered or started other careers....

[end of tape]

...and it was a good group of people. We of course scattered after eight weeks, but I kept up with some of the group through the years.

*Q: Did you have any place in mind where you wanted to go, and then what actually happened?*

CHAPMAN: Essentially my whole academic and linguistic experience was European, so that's where I wanted to end up. At that time, there was no requirement for taking an initial consular tour, so personnel had to come up with political assignments for the ten political officers in the class. They could come up with only about four such assignments overseas so the remainder of us were put into Department jobs, and I ended up in what was then the Office of German affairs, working on Berlin matters.

*Q: Oh boy.*

CHAPMAN: So that's how I ended up in my first overseas assignment to Berlin.

*Q: Well, you know I've talked to many people who have been involved with Berlin; it's really like a priesthood. You learned a theology of Berlin, and all that...*

CHAPMAN: I learned it over the years, initially from the office director, Jim Sutherland, and the head of my unit, Nelson Ledsky. I began in German affairs just after the Quadripartite Agreement had been concluded and as talks were getting underway between the two German states aimed at putting more flesh on the bones of the agreement. I recall writing

## Library of Congress

summaries of these inner-German negotiations for the then assistant secretary, Martin Hillenbrand. Otherwise I was called upon to write briefing papers on all manner of subjects and to fill in for anyone in the office who was absent on leave or for some other reason. So I had to become acquainted with a fair cross-section of substantive matters and functions within the office.

*Q: Well, I would imagine that, as you say, that after the quadripartite agreement, there was a lot of work in putting this into practical instruction. Was there a feeling at that time that we have lanced the Berlin boil and this is no longer going to be the most dangerous spot?*

CHAPMAN: I think so. The idea was that we could reach, not a final solution of the Berlin issue, but a reasonable modus vivendi with the Soviets, resulting in a more tolerable situation without the tensions that had marked the fifties and the sixties. There was the hope, particularly among the West Germans, of an improvement in inner-German relations that would allow for greater interaction on a societal as well as a governmental level, provisions for regular visits to the East and for practical improvements in the lives of Berliners. Berlin would not longer be a major bone of contention among the United States, Soviet Union, Britain and France. We could and did have differences of interpretation with the Soviets on particular provisions of the agreement; but our hope was that these would remain at the theological level and allow us to move ahead in a practical sense. One consequence of the agreement was our decision to recognize the GDR and open an embassy in East Berlin, the latter being a major theological issue in itself — how can you open an embassy in the capital of a country when you don't recognize that capital as part of the country, but rather as an occupation zone. All kinds of dancing around on pinheads had to be done to reconcile such issues. When I arrived in Berlin in January 1973 for my first overseas assignment I got increasingly drawn into issues of interpretation of the Quadripartite Agreement, of which there were many. And that was when I received my real practical training in becoming a Berlin and German expert.

## Library of Congress

*Q: I think it's a tailgate issue, you know, how far you lower the tailgates of a truck. Well know, did you sense a division between the German club of West Germans and the Berlin group, or was there enough exchange back and forth so that they were all thinking more or less along the same lines?*

CHAPMAN: There were some differences. I think it was largely a matter of "where-you-sit-is-where-you stand". The people in Berlin on the spot tended to think more in specifically Berlin terms, and in terms of sustaining our legal position in Berlin. In Bonn and in Washington they were thinking of a larger framework of relations with Germany and relations with the Soviet Union and other parts of Europe. But that said, a lot of the people in Bonn had served in Berlin and vice-versa so they had the same intellectual formation and the same experiences in their background.

*Q: You did this for two years, just about?*

CHAPMAN: Three-and-a-half years in Berlin.

*Q: Two-and-a-half years in Washington?*

CHAPMAN: I was on the desk there for just over a year.

*Q: And then off to Berlin?*

CHAPMAN: I was there from January '73 to July '76. I started out as a junior officer in the political section; helping out in practically all of the specialized functions in the section. After about nine months I was given the job of Liaison and Protocol Officer. The Protocol Officer function was largely a formal one, with responsibility for relations with the various foreign consulates situated in the American sector. But it got me invitations to all kinds of receptions around town, much more than a first-tour officer would normally receive. The liaison function meant that I was the primary contact with the Soviet embassy in East

## Library of Congress

Berlin on all Berlin matters. So, I was sort of thrown into the center of substantive Berlin matters fairly early on, and spent quite a lot of time in discussions with the Soviets.

*Q: Now who was the head of the West Berlin office?*

CHAPMAN: He bore the titles of both Minister, in Foreign Service terms, and Deputy Commandant, as part of the Allied occupation structure still in effect. The Commandant was a two-star Army general, but in practice he exercised little more than a formal role in political issues regarding Berlin. Moreover our Ambassador in Bonn was the Commandant's superior on non-military matters. Basically we were an autonomous unit, responsive to the embassy in Bonn.

*Q: Who was the Minister over there?*

CHAPMAN: David Klein, succeeded in 1974 by Scott George. The ambassador in Bonn then was Martin Hillenbrand, whom I got to know fairly well as I served as his aide when he came up to Berlin, which he did quite often. I would serve as note-taker for his periodic meetings with the Soviet Ambassador in East Berlin, generally held over lunch.

*Q: What was your impression of Martin Hillenbrand; how did he operate?*

CHAPMAN: He was a quiet, low-key diplomat; and gave the impression of being a scholar rather than a forceful, hard-charging diplomat. But he was very effective precisely because he was extremely competent and extremely knowledgeable. And he had no compunction about challenging the Soviets when that was needed. He ran afoul of Henry Kissinger and certain others at various times in his career, but he was sort of a mentor to me, and I admired him greatly. He was very kind, very gracious.

*Q: How much were we involved at this point with matters in the governing of Berlin? I know at one time we had people who were very much involved with the police and that sort of thing....*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: Essentially what we provided was a legal cover. Berlin had its own elected city government which performed the whole range of normal functions of a local government. The West German constitution considered Berlin to be a West German state. The Allies had negated that portion of the basic law, but to all practical intents and purposes West Berlin was a part of West Germany. But there were certain issues having to do with the status of the city that were reserved for the Allies, and there was a formal decision-making structure involving us, the British and the French to make decisions on such issues. There were certainly differences between the Allies and the Berlin authorities, but we rarely if ever got involved in the real substance of local government and relations with the Governing Mayor and his officials were generally very smooth. There were officers at the Allied missions who supervised the police in their respective sectors and who had to approve certain police actions. For instance, the Berlin police were allowed to carry weapons when making an arrest; but due to some quirk in occupation law they couldn't carry machine pistols without express authorization. So they would call up the relevant Allied officer to request permission, which was automatically given. So it was largely putting a judicial and legal gloss on actions that were normal actions of the city government at the time. There were in addition certain reserved areas where the Allies were alone competent to act. These generally had to do with the borders of Berlin. In my liaison job with the Soviet embassy; I was often involved in very practical issues of access to East Berlin by Americans. There were some American troops stationed in Berlin who got caught up with exfiltration rings — smuggling East Germans out across the wall. Sometimes they would get caught by the East Germans, and there then be a protracted legal tussle. Since we did not recognize East German control in East Berlin, we would deal only with the Soviets on such matters. The Soviets would initially refuse to get involved, asserting that East Berlin was under GDR control. But eventually they would relent and take charge of the case. I recall going to visit U.S. servicemen detained at the Soviet garrison in East Berlin to check on their well-being. I would then work out their release with the Soviets, who were generally amicable while making the expected political points. This was the height of the Cold War and here was I, a junior FSO, dealing with Soviet colonels

## Library of Congress

at one of the checkpoints on the wall. This was exciting stuff. While the Soviets made a great show of upholding GDR sovereignty in East Berlin and proclaiming friendship with their German socialist brothers, deep down they relished exercising their imperium in East Berlin and putting the East Germans in their place. This was, after all, not so long after the end of the war, and memories of what the Germans had perpetrated on the USSR were still very much alive.

*Q: How'd you find the Soviets, the ones you were dealing with?*

CHAPMAN: They were difficult to deal with, some more so than others, but they probably found us difficult to deal with as well. We would assert our legal view on a given issue and they would assert theirs. We'd get into controversies over us holding the Soviets responsible for a lot of things going on in East Berlin, and they'd say "Oh no, we're not responsible for those things, its all a matter for the sovereign East German government; we wash our hands of those things". And eventually after you'd push them a lot they'd come back and acknowledge they could help out, maybe "we could persuade the East Germans to do this, that, or the other. There was clearly an acknowledgement of a residual Soviet role in the city. Our language of business was German; I don't recall any of the Soviet diplomats speaking English, and at that point I didn't speak Russian. They were products of their system, of course, and weren't open to free-ranging discussions. We'd often have lunch together in either East Berlin or West Berlin; and they would religiously go through their instructions from Moscow to ask about U.S. policies on issues A, B, C, and D. You'd hear them go through the litany in their minds, and you would explain to them U.S. views or what our general thinking was, but you wouldn't get anything back from them. They were just taking note of what you had said, so they could report it back. There was no real exchange back and forth; I don't think there was ever any letting-your-hair-down and pushing back and having a drink together and that sort of thing. I also dealt with the Soviets in West Berlin. The Quadripartite Agreement provided for them to set up a Consulate General in West Berlin, and since they chose to locate this in the U.S. sector I, as U.S. protocol officer, was involved with them in a number of concrete arrangements



## Library of Congress

regarding accreditation, privileges and the like. The Soviets were all the time pressing to be accorded greater privileges than other members of the consular corps in West Berlin, which we would not allow. So there was a constant battle to pare them back to what was their proper level. And those were some difficult people to deal with, several of the key people with whom I dealt being KGB officers.

*Q: Did it penetrate to your level the sort of spy vs. spy atmosphere of Berlin at that time? Did you see any KGB and every other intelligence out or ....?*

CHAPMAN: I knew that certain Soviets I dealt with were KGB people, rather than diplomats, but there certainly was no attempt on their part to recruit me. The Soviet Consulate General in West Berlin was largely an intelligence operation; there was little consular work for them. Plus it was a status question.

*Q: How about dealing with the French and British officials?*

CHAPMAN: We were very close with the British, but not so with the French. We and the British saw eye-to-eye on most things. The French tended to keep to themselves a bit more and to be a lot more theological than even we were, in term of Berlin as an occupied city. Their attitudes towards the Berliners were different from ours, and they tended to assert their prerogatives much more than we did. I knew a few of them, not particularly well. They had the best officer's club in town, and it was a delight to go there and enjoy a good French meal at rock-bottom prices. A fair amount of the funding of the Allied presence in Berlin came from the West Germans, so-called "occupation costs". The French would really abuse that privilege, charging the Germans for things that we or the British would never consider charging. It was the French practice was to bring all of their new army recruits up to Berlin for their initial training and to charge all the costs to the German government, which we all thought was a little egregious. Maybe that was part of the French psyche, a product of the vicissitudes of Franco-German relations over the centuries.

## Library of Congress

*Q: How about relations with the Germans in Berlin; how did you find that?*

CHAPMAN: I thought it was an easygoing relationship; I don't recall any major issues over status. We recognized them for what they were, the government that was in practice in charge of the city. They accepted our role and recognized that the United States, and to a certain extent, Britain and France, were the ultimate guarantors of Berlin's freedom and political system. So I think it was an easy working relationship. They were very forthcoming with information; they took us into their confidence, and I don't remember any major controversies between us and the Germans in Berlin at that time.

*Q: When did we recognize East Germany?*

CHAPMAN: We established diplomatic relations in mid '74 and then had opened an embassy later in the year.

*Q: So, this was after you'd left?*

CHAPMAN: No, I was there. And in fact I had a peripheral role in helping Felix Bloch, a name that might be familiar to you.

*Q: Oh yes.*

CHAPMAN: He was then at the mission in West Berlin, and was given the job of working out the practical arrangements for the opening of the embassy, in terms of finding office premises and accommodations, settling details of privileges and immunities, that sort of thing. And I'd go with him occasionally to meet with the East Germans to make these arrangements.

*Q: Were the Bader Meinhof group and that sort of thing going on?*

CHAPMAN: Oh yes.

## Library of Congress

*Q: How did the affect? These are urban, home grown urban terrorists.*

CHAPMAN: During the time I was in Berlin, there was the famous kidnapping of the president of the Berlin house of representatives, Peter Lorenz. He was held for about 4 or 5 days, maybe a week, and then released unharmed. I'm not sure whether ransom money was paid or not, or whether there was some quid pro quo. There was certainly a Bader-Meinhof presence in Berlin. Whenever our ambassador was in town he would have a Berlin police escort, and I think the minister did as well. The Amerika Haus, which was in the center of town, was a target of some minor low-level terrorism while I was there. The Mission proper was on the outskirts and escaped any such attacks.

*Q: What was your impression of going over to East Berlin? What was it like there.*

CHAPMAN: Going over to East Berlin got to be a routine for me. The U.S. military had very strict rules about how you were supposed to handle yourself going through Checkpoint Charlie, perhaps necessary for the average serviceman doing it for the first time but somewhat overkill for those of us crossing over all the time. The rule was not to roll down your car window at all but simply display in the window our flag card, as it was known, and allow the East German policeman to take down the name. Because of my frequent crossings, I got to know all the East German guards at the checkpoint. I'd roll down my window and chat with them back and forth. It was pretty easy-going. Over there in East Berlin, it was a different world obviously. The place smelled different, partly because of the soft brown coal that the East Germans used for heating and power generation. The smell would often blow over into West Berlin too. Obviously things looked very different in East Berlin: the way people dressed, the way they behaved, the paucity of cars in the streets, the goods in the stores. It was almost a totally different world.

*Q: Did you go much, travel around East Berlin much?*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: In those days we didn't travel much in the GDR except to use the autobahn to go west to Helmstedt. I must have done that a dozen times. It wasn't a very good road, but you could cover the distance in a couple of hours. We did make provision to attend the annual spring fair in Leipzig. In order to avoid the complication of having an East German visa in a diplomatic passport a theological faux pas in the days before recognition of the GDR we worked it out through the Soviets for the East Germans to give us the visa on a separate sheet of paper. That kept us theologically sound. We would enter the GDR directly from West Berlin, bypassing East Berlin and thus avoiding further theological complications. Most of us who made the trip didn't spend much time at the fair; we traveled around Leipzig and the surrounding area, trying to figure out what was going on, talking with the local citizenry, etc. I took a bus trip down to Dresden and was regaled by the tour guides with tales of the destruction Allied bombings had wrought which was still plainly visible. In 1975 I crossed over the GDR on the way to Poland and then back from Czechoslovakia.

*Q: By the time you left there in seventy?*

CHAPMAN: 76, July 76.

*Q: Did Kissinger make appearances there?*

CHAPMAN: Kissinger visited Berlin in 1975, largely a mission to demonstrate the American commitment to the city.

*Q: Did you have a good number of congressional visits and other visits. People coming and posing on the Wall?*

CHAPMAN: I seem to remember a fair number of congressional visits. You would usually take the congressmen to the Wall, where they would climb up on the viewing platforms and look over the death strip and into East Berlin.

## Library of Congress

*Q: In 76 where did you go?*

CHAPMAN: I came back to Washington and worked a year on the Secretariat Staff. This was basically support work, doing some travel with the Secretary, initially Kissinger and then Vance. I got to a few places I'd never been to before Africa and parts of Eastern Europe.

*Q: Working that year in the Secretariat, was it rewarding in getting a feel for the wiring of the State Department?*

CHAPMAN: Yes, that's right. That was the idea.

*Q: Who does what to whom? And what are the things that make the Department work at the upper levels.*

CHAPMAN: It was instructive dealing with two very different secretaries, who ran the Department in very different ways. Kissinger had his own style, his own way of running the Department. Vance had a very different way of doing it.

*Q: You went on a trip with Kissinger?*

CHAPMAN: Yes.

*Q: What were you doing?*

CHAPMAN: Either advance work, going to a capital to be visited and working with the local embassy to set up the visit, or assisting with staff work on the secretary's aircraft.

*Q: After a year of that, what happened?*

CHAPMAN: I was then recruited to be the Cyprus Desk officer.

## Library of Congress

Q: *Oh boy!*

CHAPMAN: That was an eventful and exciting two years.

Q: *You were on the Cyprus desk from when to when?*

CHAPMAN: From mid-77 to mid-79.

Q: *What was the situation on Cyprus?*

CHAPMAN: This was just three years after the Turkish invasion of 74.

Q: *July of 1974.*

CHAPMAN: One of the key issues in my first year on the desk was the lifting of the embargo that Congress had imposed on arms sales to Turkey as a result of the invasion on Cyprus. The Turks made it clear they would not cooperate on Cyprus at all until that embargo was lifted, and the embargo was hurting bilateral relations with Turkey and undermining the security of NATO's southern flank. So the Carter Administration, which had come into office with a pledge to the Greek-American community to work to resolve the Cyprus dispute, decided to press Congress to lift the embargo. But to accomplish this we had to demonstrate a certain amount of progress on Cyprus, which was not easy to do at that juncture. Vance had named Matt Nimetz, then counselor of the Department, to be his spear carrier on Cyprus. Much of the time I worked directly for him rather than for the assistant secretary in EUR, traveling with him literally countless times to consult with UN officials in New York. Formally speaking, Cyprus was an issue for the UN rather than the U.S. directly, and we had to keep it within that framework even though people recognized that the U.S. was the prime motive power. So Matt Nimetz would be in frequent contact with Waldheim and Brian Urquhart, the undersecretary for political affairs, to exchange ideas and try to get things moving. Makarios died literally as I came onto the desk. So my first task was to prepare all kinds of briefing papers for the U.S. delegation to Makarios'

## Library of Congress

funeral, on subjects that at that point I knew precious little about. Makarios had been such a forceful and authoritative figure in Cyprus, and unfortunately his successor was a very cautious politician who simply did not have the clout or the daring to take any bold initiatives to try and resolve the Cyprus issue. This made it very hard to come up with any progress that would justify the lifting of the embargo or prove that correct after the fact.

*Q: This is the embargo of arms to Turkey?*

CHAPMAN: Yes. The resolution to lift the embargo passed by the narrowest of margins in the House, by just one or two votes as I recall. Obviously the Greek-American community and its supporters on the Hill were adamantly opposed. I remember getting lectured to by Sarbanes and Congressman Brademas of Indiana.

*Q: Yes. Indiana. Both of Greek, Greek-Americans.*

CHAPMAN: They were the key figures. During my second year on the desk, in recognition of the fact the embargo had been lifted, we got more involved in the substance of the Cyprus issue. While respecting the UN role, we came up with our plan for a Cyprus settlement in the fall of '71 labeling this a set of ideas rather than a plan as such. I worked intensively on this under Matt Nimetz's guidance, and we then tried to sell it to the various parties concerned. We went up to New York to meet, separately, with the president of the Cyprus House of Representatives in lieu of President Kypriano and the leader of the Turkish Cypriot community, Rauf Denktash.

*Q: I would think Tashnu is the other one.*

CHAPMAN: Denktash later proclaimed himself president of the TRNC [Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus], but as of 1978 the Turkish Cypriots had not formally declared themselves an independent entity. The Greek Cypriots were initially non-committal as to our plan, hoping that Denktash would reject it and thus spare them criticism. As it turned out, Denktash rejected the plan out of hand, noting that he felt much like Churchill

## Library of Congress

who, after hearing the news of a severe military defeat, called for a tall glass of Scotch to revive him. The Turkish Ambassador to the UN had invited us to lunch with Denktash afterwards, and given Denktash's reaction to our plan it turned out to be a glum affair. We were at a Japanese restaurant, the sort where you sit on the floor with your legs under a low table. Denktash, a former wrestler, was a very rotund individual, and after lunch he couldn't get up from under the table, so Nimetz, the Turkish Ambassador and I had to grab him by the arms and the neck and pull him up and out. Ultimately our plan didn't resolve anything, although it perhaps injected a number of new ideas into the process. I recall a UN secretariat official telling me some five or six years later that this was the best plan he thought anybody could come up with for a bizonal, bicomunal Cyprus. Personally I felt it fascinating to get directly and deeply involved in something like this, helping write a constitution for another country and contributing to overcoming decades of mutual hostility. And it was quite an experience to be with Nimetz while he tried to sell presidents and foreign ministers on these ideas.

*Q: One can make a career out of this, this along with the Israeli-Palestinian negotiations. This is something that is a life-long engagement. How did you find the Greek lobby, Greek constituency here in Washington? I mean, they must have been all over you, weren't they?*

CHAPMAN: Oh yes. Their basic view was that we were pro-Turkish and had no understanding or recognition of all that the Greek Cypriots had suffered. We certainly did recognize what thousands of Greek Cypriots had gone through in losing their homes and properties and being forced to live in refugee camps. My recollection is that the Greek-American community was not helpful at all in terms of trying to come up with any kind of solution that might be acceptable to both sides. In many ways they were more hard-line than the Greek Cypriots themselves in refusing to budge from maximal demands. They insisted that we should not be dealing with the Turkish Cypriots, but only with the Turks in Ankara. They saw the Turks as controlling what was going on in Turkish Cyprus and argued that if we put real pressure on the Turks they would relent and let the Greek Cypriots come back to their properties and everything would be fine. That to my mind was



## Library of Congress

a major underestimation of how important Cyprus was for Turkey in terms of protecting the interests of their kinsmen on the island and of how obstinate the Turks can be when they really dig themselves in and how they don't want to be seen as responding to overt American pressure.

*Q: I never really got involved except on the periphery of seeing the emotions there. I was Consul General in Athens in 1970-74. In fact, I left early July '74. Anybody who looks at this as an American sort of objectively can see that the Turkish Cypriots had a real cause. When there was this coup and Sampson and others were put in the prisons. The real thugs. The Greeks had really been nasty to the Turks. There was a subservient peasantry and all that. So that the Turkish response of coming in as if you were a Turk was quite justified. The Greeks I've seen afterwards seem to forget all that. I mean they start as though all of a sudden the Turks jumped on Cyprus for no particular cause.*

CHAPMAN: Yes, you're right that lots of Greek-Americans believed that the crisis began in 1974, ignoring all that had happened since 1963. And they recognized that there had been a coup against Makarios on the part of more extreme Greek Cypriots that produced anxiety among the Turkish Cypriots. But they argued that that was no justification for the Turkish invasion, particularly the second phase of it that brought about extensive loss of Greek Cypriot properties and occupation by the Turkish army. You're right, there had been some very real problems almost from the time of Cypriot independence in 1960, where the minority Turkish Cypriots suffered discrimination, which often turned to violence, at the hands of the Greek Cypriot majority. Under British rule the Turkish Cypriots had been scattered over much of the island, but in the sixties they tended to congregate in certain areas, some in the north and some in the south, where they would be safer living together. But these incidents of internal conflict continued to happen throughout the sixties, with a major crisis in 1967. A lot of the EOKA extremists who had fought against British rule now turned their attentions on the Turkish Cypriots. Many of them, like Nikos Sampson, were real thugs. I remember Clerides, who was later president of Cyprus, telling the story that he had Sampson as a next-door neighbor and that one day while out gardening wearing a

## Library of Congress

while shirt Sampson had come over to him and said, quite out of the blue, "Whenever I see a white shirt, I see blood and blood spreading."

*Q: He won notoriety for a killing of a British woman, or something. He was an assassin.*

CHAPMAN: Yes, that's what he was.

*Q: How did you find the Greek government at the time? They had ousted the colonels. Could they even maneuver or do anything at that point? Or were emotions so raw that there was nothing that they could do?*

CHAPMAN: My recollection is that we engaged them, both here and in Athens. They would argue the Greek Cypriot view point strongly, but would keep their distance from the issue. They wanted to see Cyprus as essentially a Greek CypriotTurkish dispute that they were not directly party to, although they generally backed the Greek Cypriots strongly. This tied in with the notion that the Turkish Cypriots were not an entity on their own but rather subservient to Turkey. The Greeks were ready to help somewhat, but not in any big way.

*Q: How much support did you get from the European Bureau? Did they look upon you as the disreputable cousins or something like that. Two NATO allies getting involved.*

CHAPMAN: Well, we were an integral part of the European Bureau, and George Vest, the assistant secretary at the time, was actively engaged. He probably saw the Cypriot Ambassador as often as Nimetz did. Obviously this was a difficult issue for the bureau to handle with two members of NATO, although the real issues that divided Greece and Turkey were not Cyprus [end of tape]

*Q: This is tape two, side one with Geoffrey Chapman. Yes.*

CHAPMAN: Yes, as I was saying, the real issues between the Greeks and the Turks in that time were less Cyprus itself than Aegean issues — overflights, demarcation lines in the Aegean, military incidents that had brought direct friction between the two countries.

## Library of Congress

And this from the NATO standpoint was the real operational issue, how to get Greek and Turkish military forces to train together and to be interoperable in support of NATO missions when they were at loggerheads over demarcation, aerial and naval incidents, aircraft straying over the border, buzzing incidents, that sort of thing.

*Q: Well, I take it you left there in, left that job in when?*

CHAPMAN: It would have been the summer of 1979.

*Q: I take it you had not solved, you personally, had not solved the Cyprus problem.*

CHAPMAN: We thought we had the solution but neither party would buy it.

*Q: What was, I mean, what was the shape of the solution?*

CHAPMAN: The basis for an agreement was that there had to be two separated communities. I think realistically the Greek Cypriots would have agreed to that as well, that the experience of living together had not worked out so they had to live separately. The issues boiled down to basically a constitution and territory. The territorial issue was the more straightforward, in terms of arriving at a percentage of the total island territory that the Greek Cypriots would occupy and a percentage the Turkish Cypriots would occupy, taking into account particular areas or locales that were of especial importance to one side or the other. It was a matter of the Turkish Cypriots yielding territory, the question being just how much. This was, in principle at least, a resolvable issue, moving the boundary here a bit and there a bit. A complicating factor was the Greek Cypriot demand for retention and free access to properties Greek Cypriots formerly owned in the north. The constitutional issue was more difficult: we proposed a confederal structure where many local powers and responsibilities would have resided with the two communities and the common government would have been responsible for foreign affairs, defense and the like. In essence, the Turkish Cypriots wanted less of a central government and more local control, and greater representation in the central government than their proportion of the

## Library of Congress

overall population would in theory allow. The Greek Cypriots wanted a more robust central government that would mirror their majority status in the island as a whole so they could effectively control developments in the island. We came up with a formula that sought to split these differences, with a national assembly largely proportionally elected, a rotating presidency, and adequate protection for minority rights.

One argument we tried to make to the Greek Cypriots all along was why not let some system like this come into being; over time, being economically stronger, better educated, more populous, they would come to dominate the affairs of Cyprus, certainly economically. Why bother, why haggle, why hassle over all the fine details of the constitution if over the long run you will clearly dominate the country? But they didn't buy that. They were so hung up on restoring the status quo ante. The Greek Cypriot government was of course under heavy pressure from the refugee organizations, representing Greek Cypriots who had been forced out of their homes in the north and would settle for nothing less than returning to them. A lot of these refugees quite deliberately refused to integrate with the rest of Greek Cyprus, which they could easily have done, and instead maintained a refugee status. The U.S. taxpayer funded quite luxurious housing for them; they by no means lived in what one normally would conceive to be refugee camps. The refugees were a very powerful lobby and no Greek Cypriot president or other leading politician could afford to ignore them, and their demands were absolute. So Greek Cypriot flexibility and ability to compromise was circumscribed from the word go.

*Q: Well, working on an issue like this feels sort of like an academic exercise, an interesting challenge, or did you- I mean, I think it would be hard to keep one's drive when you're up against a bunch of stubborn people that's not going to give.*

CHAPMAN: Well, I was only in the job for only two years. I don't think I could have stood it much longer than that. It was an intellectual challenge to come up with a scheme that you would think was palatable to both but also very much a negotiating job trying to sell

## Library of Congress

this. There are both sides to the job, and the marriage of the two was what made it so appealing to me.

*Q: So then in '79 you left?*

CHAPMAN: Yes.

*Q: Where'd you go?*

CHAPMAN: I then went to the Political-Military Bureau to work on arms control.

*Q: You did that from when to when?*

CHAPMAN: I did that from '79 through '81.

*Q: I think this probably is a good place to stop.*

CHAPMAN: Okay.

*Q: And we'll pick this up, I'll put it at the end of the tape here so we'll know where to pick it up. We'll pick this up in 1979 when you're off to Political Military?*

CHAPMAN: Right.

*Q: Having left the- having solved the Cyprus problem.*

Today is April 1st, April Fool's Day, 2005. Geoff, we're covering 1979 to '81 and you're in Political Military. What piece of the Political Military action did you have?

CHAPMAN: I was in the office that dealt with arms control and specifically strategic arms control. This was just after the SALT II (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty) treaty had been signed and had gone to the Hill for ratification. I was brought in specifically to begin working on what we optimistically in those days called SALT III, so as to be ahead of the

## Library of Congress

curve after SALT II had been ratified, as we then fully expected would be the case. There was an understanding with the Soviets at the time that we would move on to SALT III rapidly after SALT II had gone into effect. That turned out, obviously, not to be the case. For the first three months or so in PM I was actually drawn into the SALT II ratification effort, producing position papers and talking points and drafting letters and that kind of thing. Of course all of this ground to a halt in December of '79 when the Soviets invaded Afghanistan and President Carter withdrew the treaty from consideration in the Senate. And the issue then was, for me personally, what happens next? I was brought in to deal with SALT and here SALT II was clearly on its death bed, and obviously we weren't going anywhere with SALT III. So for the remainder of the Carter administration I was involved with various other arms control efforts that were still going on, which were few and far between since we'd essentially abandoned all bilateral arms control. But there were multilateral arms control talks that were still going on mostly under the aegis of the United Nations, the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace being one.

*Q: I mean, you were in a bureau that was dealing with military affairs and while it wasn't your piece of the pie, what were you getting from your colleagues about why the hell the Soviets went into Afghanistan? It's never been quite clear to me.*

CHAPMAN: I don't think we really discussed that much in PM. Later when I got into the Soviet field I began to think about that more clearly, more fully. My thinking at the time was that it was a fairly straightforward case of the Soviets' belief that if a communist regime had been installed through Soviet influence—as all had been except for the Soviet Union of course—then the fall of one such regime would initiate a sort of a domino effect for the Soviet empire and ultimately threaten the USSR itself. For that reason the Soviets, recognizing that there was or had been unrest in parts of Eastern Europe, were concerned that this might recur and for that reason all the more intent on holding on to every bit and piece of the Soviet empire.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Could you talk a little about the Zone of Peace in the Indian Ocean because this is something I think I've heard vaguely about but what was this concept?*

CHAPMAN: I've conveniently forgotten practically everything about it. My recollection is it was something that was pushed by the non-aligned and was designed to keep any American naval vessels that might be carrying nuclear weapons out of the Indian Ocean. We entered into the negotiation with the intent of negating this design and redirecting the concept in ways that would not harm our interests, while seeking to curry some kind of favor with the non-aligned by the fact of our participation. I don't remember whether the idea really got anywhere; I'm sure it didn't in the course of the sort of year or so that I was peripherally involved in it.

*Q: Just one of those almost amorphous things that was there but not particularly- no one really cared- in other words, we didn't have a strong feeling one way or the other except to make sure it didn't preclude us from sailing our ships through the area.*

CHAPMAN: Right. There were numerous such arms control and disarmament efforts which were launched through the United Nations by other countries for obvious political reasons, trying to restrict our freedom of maneuver. In most of these cases we were in a defensive mode trying either to defeat proposals completely or draw the fangs from them so they would have no practical implications.

*Q: Well in '81 where did you go?*

CHAPMAN: In early '81, at the start of the Reagan administration, there was something of a hiatus for the office I was in: here we were an arms control office and there was real doubt whether there would be any arms control in the Reagan administration. The folks in the Pentagon, my recollection is, initially dismissed it entirely, this wasn't a concern of theirs. But there were some people in the State Department who recognized that we could not as a practical matter abandon arms control entirely, and acknowledged that it might

## Library of Congress

have some concrete benefit for U.S. security. One of these people was the new director of the Political-Military Bureau, Richard Burt, who had a reputation as a conservative defense intellectual. But Burt was not that far out on the right wing, and he had a realistic notion of America's place in the world and the need for us to remain engaged internationally. This required, among other things, a well thought-out arms control policy. But he had an uphill fight convincing the White House and the Pentagon of this. Around March or April arms control supporters in the Congress began to get concerned as to whether the new administration would indeed continue with arms control, and hearings were called on the subject. Many in the administration were uncertain how to react to the request, but Burt stepped forward and arranged for Walter Stoessel, the new undersecretary for political affairs, to testify as the principal administration witness. I ended up drafting a broad-brush opening statement for Stoessel, under Burt's guidance, that we sort of cleared around a largely disinterested interagency community. The hearing itself was dominated on the administration side by Burt, who sought to make the case that the Reagan administration was going to observe some continuity, was going to have an arms control policy, and wasn't simply going to throw overboard everything that had been achieved in the area.

In the spring of '81 I received an assignment to Moscow for the summer of '82 via Russian language training. I was due to start this in September, but because I had taken some early-morning Russian language training a few years earlier and already had a tested 2/2 in the language, the powers that be at FSI decided literally two days before classes were to begin that I could not start until January. So I had to find something else to do for the next three or four months. Fortunately a position had just come open in EUR in the office of regional political-military affairs, in the section of the office that dealt with INF — Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces. This was largely the deployment rather than the arms control dimension of the INF issue.

*Q: This was the SS-20? Has the SS-20s sprung up by this time?*



## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: Yes. There was the so-called dual-track decision which was taken by the NATO alliance in 1979, during the Carter administration, to try to counter the SS-20 threat. It was essentially the Europeans who made the case that we needed to respond to the SS-20 threat, and the response agreed upon was both to seek an arms control solution and at the same time to build up a comparable force on European soil that could serve to deter a Soviet use of the SS-20 or could be used as a bargaining chip in negotiations. In the fall of 1981 I was involved in trying to smooth the way for the basing of new U.S. INF missiles in Europe. At that particular point we had basically reached agreement with Bonn on planned deployments on German soil, and with the UK, but more work needed to be done with Italy, Belgium and the Netherlands. I recall being focused mainly on Italy, where the issue was finding a temporary site for basing cruise missiles for the four to five years that it would take to construct a permanent base. We and the Italians agreed on using the existing naval air station at Sigonella for this purpose, but the Italians had a lot of work to do to overcome local opposition in Sicily. After three months in this interim assignment I then did Russian language training from January through July of 1982.

*Q: And then you went where? To Moscow?*

CHAPMAN: To Moscow, yes.

*Q: How would you describe the state of our relations with the Soviets the summer of '82 when you got there?*

CHAPMAN: Relations were not as bad as they became a little later on. We were engaged with the Soviet bilaterally, and various arms control negotiations were in progress. Still, there was obviously a lot of tension. Afghanistan was still a major sticking point so it was not a very easy relationship. It was a difficult time for an American diplomat working in Moscow. We were dealing a closed society, and our ability to make professional contacts and to produce useful information were necessarily limited. During my first year in Moscow I served as the publications procurement officer, which was a great job in many ways

## Library of Congress

because it got me to travel throughout the Soviet Union. There were of course extensive travel restrictions imposed by the Soviets, but we could travel to fairly large areas of the Russian Republic and Ukraine and to the capitals of the other constituent republics of the Soviet Union. In my three years in Moscow I traveled to all 15 republics at least once — in Central Asia, the Caucasus, the Baltics — as well as fairly extensively in Russia itself. Basically the job involved working for the agency in Langley trying to come up with all kinds of publications that are not normally available outside of the Soviet Union that might give them a better picture on what's going on there.

*Q: Well how did you find Comrade Ivanof who ran the local bookstore in Bishkek or something when you arrived there? I mean, you must have- everybody knew what you were doing. I mean, how were you received and how about buying these books?*

CHAPMAN: It varied tremendously. I don't think the center issued orders to the republics not to allow me in the bookstores. I remember encountering no problems in initial trips to the Baltics I was free to wander through the bookstores and buy what I wanted. Sometimes there was virtually nothing worth buying; other times I would come out with stacks of books. The I went down to Kiev and started shopping in a large bookstore very near to the hotel I was staying at. I was there all of ten minutes when an assistant came by and told me that the store was closing to take inventory. And this ten minutes after the store opened. Obviously it was a ruse to get me and the colleague I was traveling with out of the store. I went to other stores in the Soviet Union where they would have most of the store cordoned off, so I could only go to the children's book section for example. I'd find other stores closed down, doubtless timed to my arrival, with a sign on the door announcing that an inventory was in progress but obviously nothing of the sort going on. In one particular store in Akhshabad in Turkmenistan I plunked a stack of books on the counter only for the clerk to tell me that all except three or four were reserved for specialists and that she would not sell them to me. So it wasn't exactly a free and open buying experience.

## Library of Congress

*Q: I remember I was in Yugoslavia in the '60s and one of my local employees came up and said you should go down to the Yuga Salenska Kenega, which was the main bookstore in the main square there and they said go look in animal husbandry. And there was the book Animal Farm. Those in the know were having George Orwell's book, you know, satire on communism and having-*

CHAPMAN: In translation or in English?

*Q: It was actually in English.*

CHAPMAN: Okay.

*Q: But it was being sold in the animal husbandry side. Were you able to pick up any, on these trips- In the first place, were you harassed by the KGB or did blonde provocateurs come at you?*

CHAPMAN: To some extent. There was an embassy rule that employees could not travel alone in the Soviet Union, and often I would travel with an agency representative who was on paper assigned as my deputy. Since the Soviets were on to his affiliation, we were shadowed by the KGB everywhere, most of the time very blatantly and obviously. They were there at the airport when we arrived, and would practically wave to us in greeting. One always felt very safe because there was very little street crime at that time and in any event you could be sure that these goons would step in to protect you if something did happen. As to provocation, my colleague and I were having dinner together in a hotel restaurant in Kiev and all of a sudden these two young blondes showed up and sat down at our table and started engaging us in conversation. But that was all; I was somewhat disappointed in fact that they didn't try anything further. In several out-of-the-way places, where foreigners were a rarity, I was asked by policemen to show them my papers; normally they were satisfied after a glance at my diplomatic ID card. But that wasn't really harassment. There were other instances where I was in a restaurant and

## Library of Congress

would be befriended by other diners, who would invite me to their homes for a drink a drink. I took up these invitations a couple of times and nothing came of them. The security people would doubtless have been outraged at such visits, but I saw them as opportunities to learn more about local conditions and get ordinary Russians to express their views. I'm not sure whether these were intended provocations; many of these encounters took place in provincial towns far from the center where foreigners rarely ventured, and the authorities might simply not have warned citizens to stay away from foreigners. Who knows? I get the impression that the society at that time was not as closed and as regimented as we might have thought. The police state was not as thoroughgoing in those days as it had been during the days of Stalin.

*Q: What about, were you there during the period of demise?*

CHAPMAN: Yes.

*Q: With Brezhnev?*

CHAPMAN: Well, Brezhnev died-

*Q: Chernenko and then Andropov.*

CHAPMAN: The other way around, Andropov and then Chernenko. Brezhnev died in November of '82, just shortly after I arrived in Moscow. This was the first time since Stalin that a Soviet leader had died in office, so no one really knew what was going to happen and ostensibly there was no succession arranged beforehand. During my second and third years in Moscow I was the head of the internal political unit in the embassy so I got directly involved in leadership issues. Both Andropov and Chernenko were sick men when they came into office, and we spent a lot of time trying to track their medical condition over the less than a year and a half that Andropov was in office and barely a year that Chernenko was in office. One thing that I started doing was to try to track leadership motorcades, trying to determine who was coming to work and who was staying ill in the dacha. Police

## Library of Congress

would close down the main streets when the General Secretary's motorcade came along and everybody would scatter from the sidewalks. And I remember the first time I did this, trying to check whether Andropov who was coming to work, I stationed myself near the Central Committee building and then noticed that the crowds had suddenly disappeared from the streets. I was the only person standing there. And afterwards I thought that probably there were marksmen with their rifles trained on me in case I was some security threat. The motorcade rumbled by, I actually got a glimpse of Andropov in the back seat so I reported back that he was at least going to work. But it was things like that we had to resort to to try and determine what was going on and who was still in charge.

It was a time where our sources of information were few and far between. We had fairly ready access during the Andropov years to Roy Medvedev, the historian who was an authority on Stalin, and who considered himself to be a true Leninist. He was harassed during the Chernenko years so access to him was a little more difficult. We could not go to his apartment but he could come to ours without hindrance, which leaves you wondering about the efficiency of the system if indeed the Chernenko people were out to silence him. He still had a good range of contacts and provided us with some solid information. We had periodic access to the editor of a journal called Kommunist, which was an official party organ. This editor was a member of the Central Committee and very circumspect. He would not come out and say things in a direct and clear cut manner. It was all hints, suggestions, nuances here and there; and you had to learn how to interpret and make use of these. We also had a useful KGB contact that my predecessor and I had been introduced to, part of, as we subsequently learned, a KGB effort to have a direct channel to the embassy should they at some point need one. I would generally meet with him once a month over lunch. He never spoke a word of English in my presence, although he claimed to read Time magazine faithfully every week. He maintained that he worked for the State Committee on Science and Technology, which was obviously not true given his openness in discussing Soviet internal politics with a foreign diplomat, his dress, his

## Library of Congress

demeanor, and the fact that he read Time regularly. Later on, he was tied up with an espionage scandal involving some Marines at the embassy in Moscow.

*Q: This was Sergeant Lonetree.*

CHAPMAN: Yes. The man who was known to the Marines as Uncle Sasha I knew as Alexei Yefimov. During the time I knew him he never sought any information from me about the embassy. He rarely asked questions about U.S. policy that I couldn't answer quite openly and he would provide a few indispensable nuggets of information here and there. He gave me a tip-off on Chernenko's death before it was announced, calling me at my apartment over a weekend, which was highly unusual. It was very strange to learn afterwards that sometime after I left he was given the added task of trying to suborn some Marines in order to get access to classified premises in the embassy. It was hard to believe that the KGB would have a single agent performing two very different roles.

*Q: Well, was there the feeling or concern that with, you know, Brezhnev going basically senile in office and then Chernenko practically had to be propped up right from the beginning, I mean, you know, you felt sorry when you see the man there, when he was talking, I mean, obviously he had a hard time, even at death's door.*

CHAPMAN: Yes.

*Q: And then Andropov seemed almost, although the KGB connections seemed like a breath of fresh air until you found out he was on dialysis most of the time. But was there a concern that the leadership at the top was, well terribly weak because of this and this meant it was unpredictable and you know, and when you have something like this it can get scary?*

CHAPMAN: I think in the case of Brezhnev, yes, we all recognized that he wasn't any longer capable of exercising the functions of his office. Like Chernenko later on he was trotted out and propped up as a symbol of the regime to make the case that it was still

## Library of Congress

in existence and still functioning. This was a time when as people recognized even of stagnation in the country. The Soviet economy was stagnating, there was little effective leadership, and everybody recognized the need for change. Andropov, who succeeded Brezhnev, was considered a breath of fresh air.

*Q: Chernenko, I mean Andropov who succeeded Chernenko..*

CHAPMAN: No, Andropov succeeded Brezhnev.

*Q: Oh, I'm sorry, okay.*

CHAPMAN: Andropov was not a career KGB officer, but had worked his way up through the ranks of the communist party and was a party leader. In the spring of '82 he moved from the KGB to the Central Committee as one of the senior party secretaries. Andropov when he came into power recognized full well that the economy needed some kind of a push, some kind of a boost; but rather than actually reform the system, he sought to give it this boost by introducing greater discipline, insisting that people work harder and cut back on drinking, which obviously was a major problem causing economic losses as well as health problems. So there was a huge campaign to cut back on drinking and a huge campaign for more discipline at the workplace. There was nothing as I recall in the way of real incentives; just a focus on getting people to work on time, sober, and have them do their job. Andropov also sought to reduce the so-called gray economy that existed alongside the official state-run economy. People would work in their off-duty hours and on weekends on what were essentially private projects, earning real wages, but they would steal materials from their workplace. So there was an attempt to crackdown on this theft. This petered out as Andropov got progressively more and more sick and by the time he died then in early '84, the program had pretty much ground to a halt.

Chernenko was the last gasp of the old guard. It was well known at the time that Gorbachev was Andropov's favorite to succeed him, but the old guard asserted itself one more time. Gorbachev was recognized effectively as the second secretary behind

## Library of Congress

the general secretary, and for much of Chernenko's tenure in fact Gorbachev chaired the Politburo and ran the Central Committee apparatus because Chernenko was in no condition to do that. The old guard did not yield easily, however. Viktor Grishin, who headed the Moscow city party apparatus, engineered several of these Chernenko appearances on television where the General Secretary was literally propped up and obliged to mumble through some remarks. This only served to emphasize how frail Chernenko was, but Grishin's purpose was by association to get across the point that he was the legitimate successor to Chernenko's mantle.

When Chernenko finally expired all the cards were essentially in place for Gorbachev. During Chernenko's final months we in the Moscow embassy had an interesting dialogue — perhaps a euphemistic word for it — with analysts back here in INR (Bureau of Intelligence and Research) and in the CIA because my conviction and that of my colleagues was that Gorbachev would be the successor; all the indications that we saw and all the information we were picking up from the few sources we had was that this was going to be the case. Some of the old Soviet hands in INR and in the agency disagreed with that and somehow stories were circulating that Gromyko wanted to make himself general secretary on Chernenko's death. As it turned out Gromyko was the man who in fact pushed Gorbachev forward, who formally endorsed Gorbachev as the successor at the crucial Politburo and Central Committee meetings upon Chernenko's death. People had limited expectations of Gorbachev back then. Early on he shook up the Politburo, brought in his allies, some of whom later turned against him, such as Ligachev. He made clear that he intended to take charge, but there were no indications back then that we would soon see the flowering of Glasnost and Perestroika. Those terms weren't around back then when Gorbachev took charge in March of 1985. It was clear that he intended to pick up sort of where Andropov had left off and try to revitalize the Soviet economy; but it was equally clear that he had no intent at the start to change the structure of the economy or end the dominance of the communist party. There would be efforts to make the economy more productive, to get more work out of the average working man. In



## Library of Congress

addition there might be some loosening of controls, perhaps allowing elements of a market economy to come into existence. But I left in July of 1985 and very little of that had come to the fore by the time I left.

*Q: Well you were dealing with internal matters during this time of, I won't say troubles but-*

CHAPMAN: Uncertainty.

*Q: Of people dying, leadership dying and all which upsets. But were you seeing the Soviet system internally, with all the weaknesses that apparently Gorbachev at a certain point saw but I mean, but also 10 years later or less than that come out, the terrible state of the economy and the nationality problem and all that. I mean, was that as apparent to us at that time while you were there?*

CHAPMAN: Well certainly the state of the economy was. Just by living there and traveling around the country and talking to people, you could see that this was an economy that was not producing.

*Q: Would you just repeat that last part?*

CHAPMAN: The Soviet economy was clearly in very poor condition just by all the evidence you could see in Moscow, visiting other parts of the Soviet Union, and talking to people; it was simply not producing the goods that people wanted and needed. By this time, Soviet citizens were becoming more aware of what was happening in the outside world. Russians were able to travel to parts of Eastern Europe, not everybody but a sizeable number, and they could see that things were so much better in Hungary and the German Democratic Republic and Poland than they were in the Soviet Union. I think people were starting to question why this was happening and whether a totally managed economy was in fact best for the USSR.

## Library of Congress

On the nationalities issue, there had been periodic sort of uprisings which had been kept secret to a large extent by the Soviet leadership, happening in parts of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Obviously you couldn't get people in these areas to talk openly about how much they opposed the Soviet regime or the communist party, but it was clear they didn't like the Russians and the Russians were everywhere. The intent of the Soviet leadership was to push Russians out into the periphery of the Soviet Union so they would in effect submerge the other nationalities and would be able to run the other republics. Typically the general secretaries of the republic parties were of the local nationality, but the second secretary would invariably be a Russian who was essentially in control of the ruling party apparatus. Some of the other republics were very different from Russia. Outwardly there were similarities such as the same ugly apartment blocks that were built in Tashkent or Tbilisi as in Moscow, but the peoples and the cultures were so different. Georgia was in many respects almost a Mediterranean country, not only with regard to the climate but the way people behaved and their general openness. I remember having a wonderful five-hour-long evening conversation with a Georgian philosopher in his home in Tbilisi. I had been given his name by a colleague, and I just picked up the phone and called him and he invited me over for supper right away. So we chatted, quite openly, for about five hours. That couldn't have happened in Moscow I don't think.

*Q: Well was there any thought at the time among you or your colleagues about the ability of this empire to hold together? I mean, were we seeing this as, you know, stretching on into the far future?*

CHAPMAN: I think that really nobody foresaw in 1985 that within five or six years the Soviet Union would be gone. I think we saw it mellowing, modifying itself, perhaps introducing elements of a free market economy. I don't think we foresaw any sort of change in political structure, any change in the role of or dominance of the communist party. And I don't think we foresaw any breakup of the country.

## Library of Congress

*Q: What about with the Reagan administration there and Ronald Reagan had come in from the right wing of the Republican party and was making remarks, you know, sort of off the campaign trail and all, you know, about confrontation with the Soviet Union, was this a difficult period to sort of explain to Soviet types or among ourselves at the embassy that, you know, I mean, did we feel we were on an overly confrontational course with the Soviet Union or what?*

CHAPMAN: Well the phrase that really raised Soviet hackles was the term evil empire. To my recollection Reagan had uttered the phrase before I got to the Soviet Union so I wasn't in a position to gauge the immediate impact of it. Certainly amongst Soviet officialdom and the contacts we had there was strong opposition to what was seen as an effort by the Reagan administration simply to build up American military might and to ignore any dialogue with the Soviet Union aimed at reducing mutual threats and tensions. When I was out in the provinces people would ask me about this or that Reagan administration policy and challenge me to justify it. But it was not unusual to come across people who had a certain admiration for the United States. There was a dichotomy in many ordinary Soviets' minds between the American people and the American government: an admiration of and respect for Americans, for our way of life, for our entertainment industry, for the resilience and output of our economy, but a lack of understanding indeed outright opposition to — what the Reagan administration was up to. Relations were by no means smooth during my first year in Moscow, but they turned considerably worse after the shootdown of Korean Airlines Flight 007 in September 1983.

The shootdown brought about a real freeze that didn't start to thaw until March of 1985 when we resumed arms control negotiations in Geneva. But during those eighteen months contacts were even more difficult than they had been before, and it was very difficult to get any sense of what was going on behind the scenes in the society and the party and the government. Although preparations for the resumption of arms control negotiations were in progress during Chernenko's watch, the coming of Gorbachev brought a sense of greater

## Library of Congress

hope for U.S.-Soviet relations. There was a feeling that things were getting back onto a more even keel. But still I heard plenty of criticism of Reagan administration policies during the spring of 1985 — the military build-up, the strategic defense initiative, the deployment of intermediate range missiles in Europe where they could reach Soviet soil.

*Q: Dissidents. Did you have, was that part of your thing or did somebody else have it?*

CHAPMAN: An officer in my section was responsible for contacts with dissidents.

*Q: Who was that?*

CHAPMAN: Jon Purnell and the George Glass. A lot of their contacts were with what were called refuseniks, most of them Jewish, who had applied for emigration and had been denied. Typically there were gatherings outside the main synagogue in Moscow on Friday evenings, and Jon or George would go down there to pick up information on individual refusenik and dissident cases. That is where we got the information for our representations to the Soviet government on human rights cases. We had indirect contact with Sakharov through his wife, Yelena Bonner, whom we would visit at her Moscow apartment from time to time.

There were other people on the dissident fringe whom we got to know, some quite closely. It was impossible to have any real social relationship a foreign ministry bureaucrat or anybody else in the Soviet apparatus. But people who were on the dissident fringe, who were not labeled as enemies of the Soviet regime as such but who had run afoul of the regime in some form or fashion and who had lost their jobs, we quite amenable to friendship with foreigners. Some of these people were strong religious believers. One particular individual that I got to know was a strong Russian nationalist as well as a devout believer, a mathematician who had been fired from his job and did manual labor helping restore the Danilovsky Monastery, now the seat of the Russian Patriarchate, while his wife held down a paying job. We would get to meet a lot of unofficial artists. A lot of these

## Library of Congress

people suspected, probably correctly, that the regime was following what they were doing; but they figured that there was nothing for them to lose.

I got to know a Georgian sculptor through Alexei Yefimov, my KGB contact, and spent many pleasant social hours with him and his wife. One evening I called on the sculptor alone to find Yefimov also at the studio, and we spent several hours over some excellent Georgian dishes discussing all manner of issues in a way that was totally out of character for a Soviet official. I was openly challenging the basis of communism and the Soviet regime, and he was quite forthright and realistic in his replies. This was the one occasion I can remember of having a genuine no-holds-barred intellectual discussion with a Soviet official in which I was not simply fed the party line.

*Q: Well, who was the ambassador while you were there?*

CHAPMAN: Arthur Hartman. You may have seen he was recently in the news with this open letter opposing the Bolton nomination.

*Q: Yes, I know. How did you work with him? I mean, was he a consumer of what you were producing?*

CHAPMAN: Art Hartman was not a career Sovietologist and did not have fluent Russian, in contrast to practically every other Foreign Service ambassador we've had there. Largely because of the state of relations, he did not have easy access to senior Soviet officials. But he built up close ties within the diplomatic corps, both among western and eastern European ambassadors, and the latter in particular were good sources of information. There was generally quite a sense of camaraderie in the diplomatic corps in Moscow, extending to the Chinese among others. My internal political unit would meet periodically with our Chinese counterparts to exchange information; they were quite open and had some useful insights to share. They would regal us with magnificent banquets at the

## Library of Congress

enormous Chinese embassy; we could reciprocate only with lasagna and salad at the Embassy cafeteria or at an ordinary Russian restaurant.

Hartman excelled in running the embassy and attracted some very good people. Warren Zimmerman was DCM (deputy chief of mission) for the first couple of years I was there, and then Curt Kamman, who had been the political counselor, moved up to that slot.Q: You left Moscow in '85. Whither?

CHAPMAN: Bonn.

*Q: So you went to- and you were in Bonn from '85 through when?*

CHAPMAN: Through '89.

*Q: Through '89. You had seen lots of changes wherever you were. What job did you have in Bonn?*

CHAPMAN: I went there as the head of the political military unit in Bonn and then moved up after a year to be deputy political counselor. I got the assignment through Rick Burt, whom I'd worked for in the PM bureau.

*Q: And Burt was ambassador?*

CHAPMAN: Burt arrived in Bonn in late summer of 1985. I had known his DCM, Jim Dobbins, for a number of years as well. Frankly a lot of people had a hard time working with Rick Burt, although I managed to get along with him reasonably well.

I: I've heard that when he came in he was sort of in a way busting up the old German club and bringing some, I mean, at least I've heard people say he was trying, you know, coming in with a different crew. And you, I mean-

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: I guess I was one of them. Although I'd served in German affairs before, I could hardly qualify as a charter member of the German club. I remember when I got to Bonn that some people were murmuring that I had gotten the assignment simply because I was one of Rick Burt's people, not because of my qualifications, background, and experience. Jim Dobbins as I recall had not served in Germany before but he was certainly very knowledgeable on the international security issues that were a huge component of our relations with the Germans at that time, as of course was Burt. Burt was still relatively young and had his own ideas of how to run an embassy, and he did not have a smooth relationship with the foreign minister at the time, Hans-Dietrich Genscher. On the other hand, he had served as Assistant Secretary for European Affairs and had good ties to the White House, and was effective at getting Embassy views across in Washington. Frankly, I think that the German club had become too inbred at that point, and that what Burt did was probably good for the service.

*Q: Oh, absolutely. Well, when you got there what was, with political military, what was the issue? In the first place, had you gotten any, I mean, by the time you got there, how had the SS-20 versus the Pershing missile, cruise missile thing, had that settled?*

CHAPMAN: No. Negotiations had only resumed in March in a new three-part format of strategic, intermediate range and space negotiations. The major decisions had already been taken about the deployment of Pershing II and ground-launched cruise missiles in Germany, but we were still in the process of implementing those decisions. I was the co-chair with a German MOD counterpart of a working group dealing with all the fine details of implementing the deployment decisions. There was a tremendous amount of public opposition in Germany to the deployments, and to counter that we had an active public diplomacy campaign. I remember doing a tremendous amount of public speaking at the time. The Germans loved to invite American diplomats to talk to local party organizations and university groups, and a frequent tactic of theirs was to invite both an American diplomat and a Soviet diplomat to the same session and have us both speak,

## Library of Congress

in the anticipation that we would be at odds with each other and then the German hosts, mirroring the role the German government often saw for itself, could step in and build bridges between us. Interestingly enough, it sometimes turned out that the Soviet and I would agree and the Germans would take a different position entirely. SDI was of course a big issue at the time because the Europeans-

*Q: Strategic Defense Initiative.*

CHAPMAN: Yes, the Strategic Defense Initiative. The Europeans and the Germans in particular were just not convinced about its validity, viewing it not as a defensive move but rather an effort to gain superiority over the Soviet Union, effectively ratcheting tensions up even further. I myself was not a strong believer in SDI but obviously I had to go out there and defend the policy and argue for it, sometimes in solid left wing environments. But even in those environments the discourse was always at a fairly rational level. There was little in the way of invective, vituperation, or insults. It was all very much on an intellectual plane. My experiences with the right wing in Germany were somewhat different. During my second, third and fourth years in Bonn, when I was deputy counselor, I worked closely with Dobbins and Burt on international security issues. We had umpteen visits by Paul Nitze and other major administration officials who came to consult with the Germans on arms control — Mike Glitman, who was in charge of the INF component of the negotiations, and John Tower, who was head of the START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty) strategic side of the negotiations. I ended up doing a lot of speechwriting for Burt on international security topics. This was tough assignment initially, but after a while I got to learn his style and to anticipate his needs and thoughts. There were definitely some rough angles in U.S.-Germany relations at that time, a lot of this irritation stemming from what we saw as efforts by the foreign ministry and Genscher personally to take what we thought was too much of an equidistant position vis-à-vis the United States and the Soviet Union. Germany was, after all, a NATO ally, and the expectation on our side was that they would support us and work with us rather than trying to set themselves up as sort of a third entity midway



## Library of Congress

between the United States and the Soviet Union. This rubbed a lot of people the wrong way.

*Q: What about, how about Kohl? Where did he fit in this?*

CHAPMAN: Kohl was instinctively more pro-American than Genscher, but Genscher really ran the show in foreign policy. It was intriguing to watch as Washington, thinking that the U.S. model of a powerful White House/NSC role in foreign policy applied to Germany, would send somebody over to see Helmut Kohl and more or less ask him to bring Genscher into line. But the German cabinet system did not work that way. The answer was never satisfactory: Kohl would go on talking and talking but you'd never get a very clear line out of him. There was no chancellery apparatus that was any way as powerful as the NSC apparatus. The chancellery foreign policy staff consisted mainly of diplomats seconded from the Foreign Ministry whose careers largely depended on Hans-Dietrich Genscher.

*Q: And Genscher had been there forever.*

CHAPMAN: Yes. Horst Teltschik, who was the equivalent of our national security advisor, was not a strong political figure. Kohl was a frequent interlocutor for us, but the man who ran foreign policy was Genscher. The defense minister, Manfred Woerner, did not play much of a foreign policy role. He was solidly pro-American and enjoyed his contacts with the U.S., but within German government circles he was not a dominating figure like Genscher was.

*Q: Well did, how did, while you were there, how did the confrontation work out as far as, you know, intermediate missiles? I mean, was it more or less, reach an equilibrium or something or were- during the four years you were there, were there lots of demonstrations?*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: U.S.-Soviet relations certainly improved considerably during the second half of the '80s, coinciding with my time in Bonn. There were summit meetings between Reagan and Gorbachev, and the INF treaty was concluded. Improvements in superpower relations made for far fewer disagreements between us and the Germans, who were very happy to see progress on INF in particular. With the zero option adopted in the INF agreement, this meant that the Pershing IIs and ground-launched cruise missiles would disappear from German soil, thus ending the political difficulties that deployment had caused for the Kohl administration.

The zero option originated, incidentally, with the Pentagon and personally with Richard Perle, who was generally seen as somewhat to the right of Genghis Khan. It was purely a political ploy from the start. The Defense Department essentially wanted to remove any pressure from the Europeans and others to adopt a more forthcoming arms control posture so they pressed for adoption of the most forthcoming arms control posture imaginable — elimination of the weapons on both sides. But they reasoned that the Soviets would never accept zero, which meant that our INF deployments could go ahead as planned. You would think that the Europeans would accept the zero option as it would eliminate the Soviet threat and cancel out deployments on European soil. But they opposed it on the grounds that it was non-negotiable; the Soviets, they claimed, would never accept zero. So the German position for many years was that we should try to negotiate reductions down to a minimum level sufficient to deter Soviet use of the SS-20; but that a zero option was not serious.

*Q: When we're talking about the zero option we're talking about the intermediate ones, not the intercontinental.*

CHAPMAN: Yes, right. But even with the elimination of this class of missiles, the Germans still had concerns about the Soviet nuclear threat to Europe. Clearly the SS-20s were their primary concern, but even with their elimination the Germans, given their geographical position, were uniquely vulnerable within the Alliance to shorter range Soviet missiles

## Library of Congress

forward deployed in Eastern Europe. So they put on a strong push for reducing or eliminating what were called short-range nuclear weapons concomitant with acceptance of zero to zero in intermediate range forces. Again this was area where there was a major asymmetry between the Soviets and NATO, in that we had very few of these shorter range systems — some older LANCE systems that went back I think to the late '60s or early '70s but nothing that was modern and in the quantities the Soviets had in Eastern Europe.

*Q: Were we concerned during this period you were there with someone under the push of Genscher of Germany making a deal and sort of opting out of NATO to be neutral and getting closer ties with East Germany or anything like that?*

CHAPMAN: I don't think we had any concern at that time about Germany opting out of NATO as such. That was never seen to be really in the cards. I think there was a bit of concern about the Germans adopting more of a neutral stance. As I mentioned, one of their hopes was to try and set themselves up as sort of a third force between the Soviet Union and the United States and positioned to help the two superpowers come together for the benefit of all humanity. We were concerned when the Germans adopted this tack rather than behaving as we hoped they would as stalwart members of the Western Alliance. This ran the risk, as we saw it, of Germany adopting a more neutralist position on the issues.

As to ties between West and East Germany, this gets into the reunification question which, while historically ever-present, was starting to come to the fore in the last year or so that I was in Bonn. The long-held West German position on reunification, going back to the time of Brandt and Schmidt and Egon Bahr, was that this was a long-term process that in many ways depended less on overt moves to improve ties with the East German regime than on trying to open up the GDR and to build up people-to-people ties, to construct a network of ties between the two states in the expectation that, together with a new generation in East Germany, this would bring about different political culture more attuned to the West and accustomed to dealing with the West. This went back to the slogan of “change

## Library of Congress

through coming together” as coined by Brandt and Bahr: the Quadripartite Agreement and the follow-on agreements between West Germany and East Germany and between West Berlin and the GDR fitted very much into this Brandt-Bahr concept. Increased visits between Germans on both sides of the divide and increased cultural exchanges would serve to help build up this whole network of ties. This continued to be the basic German approach through to the time of Kohl and Genscher. If you asked the average politically-aware German in the spring of 1989 for his views on reunification, he would have replied that this was still a desirable goal that German politicians should keep in mind, but that it was something for the distant future and would not be achieved in his lifetime. At that point in time people had actually dropped the “re-” and were talking about unification rather than reunification, recognizing that the two parts of the country had been separated for so long and had grown apart, so that you couldn't really speak of just bringing them back together again — they were two different entities that had to be merged in a more complex process. With the benefit of hindsight, we can now see that the Kohl government handled unification too much as a reunification, in the belief that the two parts of the country would easily meld back together again, and not enough as a unification, implying a more long-term and thought-out process in which the real differences between the two parts would have been taken fully into account.

Vernon Walters, who succeeded Rick Burt as ambassador in the spring of '89, was much taken by the whole unification issue upon his arrival. So he asked the political section to do an in-depth analysis of thinking in the Germany body politic on the issue. Basically we came back with much the same answer that I've just described, that people were talking about it and saw it as a desirable goal but a long-term one that was not going to be achieved in their lifetimes. Walters thought somewhat differently, sensing that more rapid change was in the offing. And of course he was proved right. A couple of years later I asked Walters why he was so far ahead of the rest of us in the spring of '89. He told me that he had been encouraged to believe that German unification would soon be a real possibility as a consequence of the Soviet decision to pull out of Afghanistan

## Library of Congress

and to cease propping up the communist regime there. He had felt that this decision had immediate implications for Soviet policy in Eastern Europe, in the sense that, once a decision had been taken to let one communist regime fail, it would be harder politically to prop up deteriorating communist regimes elsewhere. With the political and societal ferment brewing in 1989, serious challenges were bound to come soon to communist regimes in Eastern Europe. Putting down such challenges might require substantial application of Soviet military force and would probably be a dubious proposition anyway; and it would go directly counter to Gorbachev's policy of engagement and cooperation with the West and with what he was trying to achieve domestically.

*Q: You mentioned earlier on, said, you know, the left wing was a problem but the right wing, that's another story. Tell me about your experiences with the right wing in German politics.*

CHAPMAN: One episode comes to mind from about February in '89. I was invited to speak, again with a Soviet diplomat, in Bavaria, before a right wing organization. The discussion got around to reunification, with the question being posed to me as to what the U.S. had done recently to promote this. This was at a time before reunification became a hot topic, and I essentially answered with the standard U.S. position that we supported reunification but that this was something that was a matter for the Germans themselves to decide, as part of a political process between West and East Germans. This was not something that the United States could instigate, and we weren't about to make a huge push with the Russians or with the East Germans in favor of unification. We would support reunification, indeed, but we were not about to get out in front and lead. This response was met with a chorus of boos on the part of my audience. One member of the audience maintained that by the terms of the 1954 conventions by which the FRG achieved full sovereignty the U.S. was obliged to work actively to overturn the regime in East Germany and reunify the country, not necessarily by brute military force but something close to this. Of course the language of the conventions did not require anything like this, but simply

## Library of Congress

support for reunification. So my message did not get across very well and my Soviet counterpart in fact got more applause than I did at the end of the session.

*Q: This is tape three, side one with Geoff Chapman.*

What about the Green Party? How did you see that at the time?

CHAPMAN: I don't think at the time anybody was particularly concerned about the Greens. They were represented in the Bundestag, but they were few in number and there was still a major conflict going on within the Greens between the Realists and the Fundis, the Fundamentalists, for control of the party. The CDU-FDP coalition was firmly entrenched, and if there was to be a change of government what we saw as most likely was the FDP changing sides as it had done back in 1982-3 when Kohl came to power. It was considered highly unlikely that the SPD could come to power on its own, and an alliance between the SPD and the Greens viewed as out of the question. The Greens were an irritant but were not seen as a potent political force. We had contacts with them, including with Joschka Fischer, later foreign minister in the Schroeder government, but we didn't see eye-to-eye on anything really.

*Q: What about France? What the German-French connection a force that concerned us or we felt was great or how did we view that during the time you were there?*

CHAPMAN: There was obviously a very close relationship between Kohl and Mitterrand and the two governments worked very closely together. They prided themselves as the engine of the European community. But there were areas of friction, on a practical level, in the Franco-German relationship. One such area had to do with the deployment of French forces in Germany: the French, much like us and the British, chafed under the increasing tight restrictions that the Germans tried to impose on troop and low level flying. This got to the point where much of the training for U.S. air force units stationed in Germany was conducted in British airspace, not over the territory that those units would be called upon to defend in the event of hostilities with the East. The French with their own nuclear force

## Library of Congress

de frappe remained largely aloof from what was going on in the arms control arena out of concern that if they got too engaged their own forces would be brought into the equation somehow; this didn't always sit very well with the Germans. Of course as you move up higher in the political hierarchy on both sides and addressed issues of European policy and European unity, the disagreements at a lower level were papered over. There was this tremendous belief on both sides that they had to do all they could politically to ensure that Franco-German disagreements not return to the level they had during the first half of the 20th century and that the two countries work in unison. My own feeling at the time was that this was something the Germans wholeheartedly embraced that but it seemed to go somewhat against the grain for the French, who had always prided themselves on their national independence, independent foreign policy, and independent military and nuclear policy. Perhaps the French felt that they could better contain the Germans within a more unified European structure, and that folding them completely into Europe would prevent any future German aggression. Perhaps the Germans felt that given their size and economic strength they could effectively dominate a unified Europe and spread their political influence that way. They managed to work together, even though their ultimate aims may have been different.

*Q: While you were there, did you see any shift in the situation in East Germany at that time?*

CHAPMAN: Not to my recollection. Erich Honecker was a quintessential a hard-liner and a resolute supporter of the Soviet Union, and had very little or no tolerance for internal dissent. He sought to control the unrest and ferment that were beginning to swirl within East German society, particularly in the churches, but with limited success. Actually, my impression from what limited travel I had done in the GDR was that the society was not as tightly controlled and regimented as some in the west would have believed. I remember getting into discussion when I was in Berlin in the early '70s as how to characterize the East German regime. There some in the mission in Berlin at that time who simply characterized it as a dictatorship, but my own view was that it was more of an authoritarian

## Library of Congress

than a totalitarian dictatorial society. It certainly was not a totalitarian society the way Nazi Germany was. The political process, right up until the downfall of the regime, was controlled by the communist party; but rigid controls did not seep down that deeply and were not all-pervasive. East Germany was economically the showcase of Eastern Europe, although when you went over from West Berlin to East Berlin the contrast could not be more marked. But compared to Poland, Rumania and certainly the Soviet Union, the East Germans were economically well off.

*Q: What about, I mean as just recently having been a Soviet hand, what were you, how are you seeing the Gorbachev thing? Were you seeing that, you know, we've got to get ready for real changes or how were you doing, what you were getting?*

CHAPMAN: I continued to follow events in the Soviet Union fairly closely for at least two or three years after I left Moscow. My sense was that in the '85-'86, early '87 timeframe Gorbachev was continuing to build his strength within the party and the bureaucratic apparatus and to put his stamp on Soviet society and policy; but there were fairly clear indications that he was not having his own way entirely, that there was a fair amount of internal opposition within the party to what he was trying to do. His opponents feared that any opening up of the society would jeopardize their and the party's dominant position, that it would be very hard to put a stop to reform when things went too far. I think a bit of caution on our part was justified at the time. Although perestroika and glasnost were the watchwords of the moment, and the Soviets were taking a more pragmatic and cooperative tack internationally, this did not mean that Gorbachev's ultimate success was assured or that U.S. and Soviet goals in international affairs were converging. The hardliners in Moscow could still influence policy. Their sway diminished as the years went by, but the events of 1990 proved that there was still life in them. Moreover, even in the late 80's Gorbachev's foreign policy aims were by no means identical with our own.

*Q: Well then, well you left in the spring of '89?*



## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: Summer.

*Q: Summer of '89.*

CHAPMAN: July, yes.

*Q: You didn't, there was no sense of apr#s moi le deluge or anything like that?*

CHAPMAN: No.

*Q: I'm told that people came out and talked, were making presentations about how the split between East and West Germany was going to be there for a long time and in November practically.*

CHAPMAN: By my recollection the sense in Bonn, both in the government and in the political class generally, was that the division between the two German states would continue for many more years. I don't think anybody really had any inkling that things would happen so fast.

*Q: Well, one last question on this topic. When you were talking to, I assume you would talk from time to time to British, I mean German Foreign Service officers and all, did you find them at all restive under Genscher?*

CHAPMAN: Restive?

*Q: Well, I mean, you know, feeling that, I mean, did there seem to be a separate course or were they both disciplined and seemed to go along with how Genscher was running foreign policy?*

CHAPMAN: German diplomats generally recognized that Genscher was a very powerful figure in the government and was very much in charge of foreign policy, and that this accordingly elevated the importance of the foreign office bureaucratically and their own

## Library of Congress

role. Certainly there were some who in private conversations would express reservations about Genscher's policies and adopt what one might call a more pro-American stance, and who felt that Germany should not have this sort of in-between position between West and East and should be more firmly anchored in the Western camp. There were certainly people who would express those sentiments. I don't recall hearing of any open dissent within the foreign office. From time to time some of the diplomats who went over on temporary assignment to the Chancellery would articulate views somewhat different from Genscher's, but the Chancellery was not a powerful force in foreign policy.

*Q: Chancellery being where Kohl was.*

CHAPMAN: Yes, right.

*Q: But anyway, I just want to say the chancellery was where the chancellor was.*

CHAPMAN: Right.

*Q: Kohl.*

CHAPMAN: The foreign policy shop in the Chancellery was small but attracted some of the best people from the foreign service ranks. Among the senior people in the foreign office there was a powerful group of out-and-out Genscherites who had been his protégés going back to the mid-70's many years and whom he had promoted quickly through the ranks.

*Q: Who'd been there long enough to really develop a-*

CHAPMAN: These senior officers owed their rapid rise almost entirely to Genscher and they were intensely loyal.

*Q: Okay. Well, we'll put at the end here you left in the summer of '89 and where did you go?*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: Back to Washington.

*Q: What were you doing in Washington?*

CHAPMAN: I went into the European Bureau, specifically into the Office of Regional Political Military Affairs, where I was involved directly in the negotiations on CFE (Conventional Forces in Europe).

*Q: Okay then, we'll pick it up then. Great.*

CHAPMAN: Alright.

*Q: Today is the 14th of April, 2005. Geoff, you were there from 1990, you were European RPM from 1990 to when?*

CHAPMAN: I started in September '89.

*Q: September, okay.*

CHAPMAN: And left in the summer of '91.

*Q: What was the issue? You say you were dealing with conventional arms. What was the issue that you were mainly dealing with?*

CHAPMAN: EUR's role was essentially to backstop the U.S. delegation in Vienna and our people in NATO. This was a complicated process. CFE was a multilateral arms control forum in which all the NATO and then Warsaw Pact countries were engaged, and in theory at least Western policy in the negotiations was coordinated amongst the NATO allies in Brussels so that we would all sing off the same sheet of music while doing the actual negotiating in Vienna. The particular job that my office had was to write and coordinate interagency the instructions that went into our mission in NATO for intra-Alliance coordination, but in effect we were writing instructions for the delegation in

## Library of Congress

Vienna as well. I remember this as an exceedingly busy time, and I often remained in the office until past midnight to finish interagency clearance of instructions for the following day. CForiginally entitled CAF#, but that prompted too many jokes for a Vienna-based forupicked up where the old MBFR (Mutual and Balanced Force Reduction) negotiations had left off, and there was a hope, at the beginning little more than that, that the simple change in forum coupled with Soviet readiness to discuss equipment reductions would produce results where MBFR had yielded precious little over the years. Clearly it was the break-up of the Soviet empire in Eastern Europe, as well as ongoing change within the Soviet Union and in Soviet policy, that made it possible to conclude an agreement in little more than a year. What started out as a bloc-to-bloc negotiation ended up as more of a more free-for-all on the Eastern side, with group discipline eroding day by day. Still the treaty's provisions were cast in terms of a Western group of nations and an Eastern group of nations, representing NATO and the former Warsaw Pact. Each group of nations then determined how to divide its allotted equipment totals among its members. This was in itself a protracted and complicated process that then had to be repeated, at least in part, when the Soviet Union broke up and the old Soviet holdings had to be parceled out amongst the new republics.

Policy-making on CFE in Washington was often a real tussle. I participated in an interagency working group chaired by the NSC that took the first cut at crafting policy and developing instructions. The group was chaired, incidentally, by Heather Wilson, who is now a Republican congresswoman from New Mexico but then had just resigned from the Air Force. In classical interagency fashion, issues that we could not resolve in the working group were referred to an assistant secretaries group and higher as necessary. The dynamics were unusual, in that often the State Department and the Joint Chiefs of Staff were arrayed against the Office of the Secretary of Defense and ACDA, not the line-up one would most expect. On the face of it, ACDA should have been the most desirous of achieving an agreement and the most pro-arms control, but it often turned out that they were very difficult to deal with. I don't know whether this had to do with the particular

## Library of Congress

ACDA officials engaged on CFE, or whether the agency leadership had decided to take a tougher line. But my recollection is that we in the State Department cooperated most easily with Joint Chiefs of Staff, which obviously put us in a better position than if JCS and OSD were lined up against us. OSD representatives had to acknowledge that it was difficult to challenge the Joint Chiefs on purely military issues, which of course were the essence of the negotiation.

*Q: Well, I would think that you went into this, I mean here you are and by the time you were doing this, the situation was disintegrating.*

CHAPMAN: Oh yes.

*Q: And so you have battalions of tanks or whatever you want to call them, sitting under the control of East Germany, which is rapidly sort of joining up with West Germany. You've got Czech tanks, which had been part of the Warsaw Pact, which is now obviously removing itself. I mean, how do you, I mean, it's like shooting at a target that's wiggling all over, you don't know who, in a way you didn't know whose side, a lot of this equipment would be on or whether it would be on any side.*

CHAPMAN: That was true in a sense although for many of the countries of the Eastern Bloc, the Warsaw Pact countries, the predominant holdings of equipment were still Soviet-held rather than the East German or Czech. Despite all the changes going on, or perhaps in part because of the state of flux in Eastern Europe, the Soviets wanted to keep as much as they could in Eastern Europe or at least to have substantial holdings of treaty limited equipment in areas of the Soviet Union adjacent to Eastern Europe. This became a key issue because we wanted to encourage them to move their equipment as far into the Soviet Union as possible and preferably beyond the Urals, both to constrain their ability to intervene militarily in Eastern Europe and to limit the threat to NATO's flanks, those areas (Turkey and Norway) where NATO territory directly abutted the Soviet Union. Of course,

## Library of Congress

encouraging the Soviets to move equipment beyond the Urals aroused concerns among the Chinese and the Japanese.

*Q: Were we concerned about the southern flank, particularly Turkey and, you know, the Soviets had and still have problems down with the Caucasian countries, and parts of its own country Chechyen and that. Was that an issue while you were there?*

CHAPMAN: Yes. Turkey was concerned that a lot of Soviet equipment pulled out of Eastern Europe might end up adjacent to Turkey on the southern flank, and that's why we insisted on writing special flank provisions that would prohibit the Soviets from stationing more than a certain amount of equipment on the flank area facing Turkey. And the same applied to the northern flank as well, so that the Soviets could not station disproportionate forces opposite Norway or Sweden or Finland. In the north these special restrictions applied generally to the Leningrad military area, and in the south to Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan and the northern Caucasus.

*Q: Well, what were you getting from your sources about how the Soviets were- were the Soviets and the negotiators having- in disarray or, what was their outlook as we saw it?*

CHAPMAN: It was clear that the Soviets were having a hard time keeping control over their Warsaw Pact colleagues, at least compared to previous multilateral arms control negotiations. Eastern positions would emerge that were plainly not exactly what the Soviets would have wanted. A lot of these countries quite rightly wanted to get Soviet forces off their own territory, or at least to see them substantially reduced, which went against the grain of the Soviet desire to have at least a modicum of strength in Eastern Europe to sort of protect their own interests in view of all the uncertainty that existed at that time. I don't recall enough of the actual negotiations in Vienna to be able to give a complete answer to that question as to how much the Soviets were in disarray. It was certainly a very different picture from what it had once been. There was strong evidence

## Library of Congress

that Soviet imposed cohesion within the Warsaw Pact was breaking down and that had an effect on their negotiating position.

*Q: Were we, I mean were you, U.S. seen a problem in NATO with our NATO allies of saying oh, we don't any war, let's get rid of all this military equipment, almost unilateral disarmament?*

CHAPMAN: There were differing views, obviously, within the NATO alliance, and quite often a lot of frustration among certain European allies that we were holding things up and moving much too slowly. They took the position that, in the new circumstances in Europe, we could certainly afford to make more concessions. The British were probably the closest to us in their way of thinking. The Germans tended to be more eager to reach agreement as it was in their obvious interest to push Soviet forces out of East Germany, while an agreement would also help alleviate domestic pressures to reduce the size of American forces stationed in the Federal Republic as a way of lessening the disruption that those forces caused in the way of training damage and noise from low level flying. And it was generally in keeping with the more forward-leaning German approach towards dealing with the East that they would push for a faster pace in the negotiations.

*Q: Well then, what particular, did you have any particular area that you were particularly working on?*

CHAPMAN: Not really. I functioned as a section head within RPM and there people in the section who worked on specific areas; my job was to oversee the process and ensure that instructions to the field got out on time. We were actually writing instructions for our representatives on a number of coordinating groups at NATO, working on verification issues and data as well as the overall negotiating strategy. The group that dealt with verification matters was labeled the green team, and was not surprisingly dominated by intelligence people from the various allies. My section did not have any verification experts, but it was still our job to write and clear the instructions for green team meetings and get

## Library of Congress

feedback from our NATO mission and the delegation in Vienna. We had only a handful of people — myself, two other officers and a couple of presidential management internand the pace of work was intense. More times than I would care to remember one agency would hold up the transmittal of instructions until late in the evening before a key NATO session, and typically the issue in contention had been taken to the agency leadership so there was no room for flexibility at the working level. We would end up trying to resolve this issue at 10:30 at night, and not finding too many people around to deal with. So many times I would send the draft instructions over to Heather Wilson at the NSC with a number of bracketed sections, leaving it up to her to resolve the dispute. She was a decisive person, and would usually rule against the lone hold-out and then take the flak the following day. I might add, since the agency doesn't exist anymore, that most often it was the ACDA people who caused these last-minute problems.

*Q: You would think ACDA would be for, you know, things going in the right direction and all.*

CHAPMAN: I can't explain it. It was a mystery to all of us why ACDA proved so difficult.

*Q: I mean, let's make a posit. What about ACDA could see the handwriting on the wall that essentially there's going to be a lot of disarmament and why do you need to have a disarmament agency if the major cause of arms control is being the confrontation between the two blocs it was going out of business? I don't know.*

CHAPMAN: I don't think that was the case, at least not that early on. In the succeeding years we essentially went beyond arms control as it had been known for many decades. We then no longer had a bloc-to-bloc situation, not only in the conventional arena but in other arms control negotiations conducted, say, through the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. Once the Soviets were out of Europe and the superpower relationship lost some of its focus, we moved away from classical arms control to concentrate more on non-proliferation, not only nuclear but chemical and biological as well. We



## Library of Congress

strengthened the biological weapons convention of 1972 and negotiated a chemical weapons convention.

*Q: Well, that would be a case for the Soviets and the Americans to be on the same side, wouldn't it?*

CHAPMAN: Yes. In the field of chemical weapons the United States and the Soviet Union or Russia had by far the greatest holdings of any countries, and both of us, I believe, wanted to get rid of these weapons because we simply couldn't envision their use. The main concern on our part was whether the Russians were being totally honest, whether they had in fact declared all the weapons they had and would destroy everything as they promised. But beyond the U.S.-Russian equation was the general concern about chemical weapons or the chemicals or their precursors getting into hands of others who might be willing to actually use them in warfare or in a terrorist incident.

*Q: Well by the time you left in '91, how stood things in your perspective?*

CHAPMAN: The CFE treaty was signed in 1990, and there were some surprises when it came to exchanging data with the Soviets that had to do with the issue of naval forces. Naval forces per se were not covered in the treaty, and we had taken a very firm position from the very start that they should not be included. In the initial data exchange the Soviets cited the exclusion of naval forces as justification for their not reporting large numbers of tanks and armored combat vehicles which were allocated to naval infantry forces rather than land forces per se. We had thought there was a clear understanding that equipment belonging to naval infantry would be counted. This turned into a major problem, and we envisaged all sorts of difficulties when it came to ratification of the treaty. Opponents were bound to emphasize that here the Soviets were violating the agreement before the ink was dry. So we embarked on a further negotiation designed to effectively impose limits on treaty-limited equipment allocated to naval forces, and this obviously delayed for some time the process of finally wrapping up the treaty. Then later the dissolution of the Soviet

## Library of Congress

Union brought with it further problems in terms of allocating Soviet treaty holdings among the successor republics.

For the second year of this assignment my section also took on responsibility for backstopping a separate set of negotiations in Vienna aimed at concluding further confidence-building measures between East and West, going beyond those already agreed in the CSCE context. This embraced what we used to call soft arms control — notifications of troop movements, reciprocal visits and inspections, and other such measures designed to engender openness and trust and bring about military stability in Central Europe. These were much less prominent negotiations, and they were concluded satisfactorily in the spring of 1991.

*Q: Well then in '91 when you finished where did you go?*

CHAPMAN: I was then assigned as deputy director of the office of Central European affairs, which covered Germany, Austria and Switzerland. Much of my two years in this assignment was devoted to following up on German unification in October 1990, tying up loose ends and that sort of thing. We carried out a fairly substantial renegotiation of the German supplementary agreement to the NATO status of forces agreement that pared back on some of the particular rights and privileges that U.S. forces had in Germany under the old agreement. This was done largely at German behest, so as to bring the agreement more into accord with full German sovereignty.

*Q: Did this include getting out of Berlin?*

CHAPMAN: Not as part of this agreement. We had removed our forces from Berlin as part of the unification process when the four power status of Berlin legally ceased to exist. That was all agreed up as part of the pre-unification package. The supplementary agreement had never actually applied to the forces we had in Berlin which were there in their own right as, legally speaking, an occupation force. It applied only to forces in the Federal Republic proper. As a matter of practice, however, a lot of the procedures that

## Library of Congress

were employed with our forces in the Federal Republic were carried over to the forces in Berlin because both were under the same U.S. Army command, and the military generally like to follow uniform practices and procedures.

*Q: You had Austria and Switzerland too? You know, they both were neutral countries but all of a sudden neutrality was no longer, meant anything almost, you know, I mean, in this situation, you had all sorts of other countries. Did you see, were they trying to readjust, or adjust their status regarding the alliance or was it business as usual?*

CHAPMAN: In the case of Switzerland neutrality was a somewhat different concept than in the case of Austria. Swiss neutrality had been gone back for centuries; in Austria it was of more recent vintage, a factor of the Cold War. The Swiss showed little or no inclination to change things in the early nineties; my recollection is that an association agreement with the EU that would have brought Switzerland some tariff benefits was rejected by popular referendum. But Austria certainly wanted to end its formal neutrality status and join the EU and more generally to be included in Western councils.

*Q: Well then, you by what, '93 you had moved on?*

CHAPMAN: I went to London in the summer of '93.

*Q: London, oh.*

CHAPMAN: I was deputy political counselor at the London embassy for three years. The job came open unexpectedly, and I of took it as much for personal as professional reasons. My mother, who was English born, had gone back to live in England after my father died and was only an hour's drive or so from London. So obviously the idea of being able to see her quite frequently was obviously attractive to me.

*Q: Well then, what were you doing from '93 to '96 in London? I mean, what were you mainly?*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: I had sort of a mixed portfolio, with certain substantive responsibilities of my own but also acting as alter ego to the political minister-counselor.

*Q: Who was that?*

CHAPMAN: Mike Habib.

*Q: How do you spell that?*

CHAPMAN: H-A-B-I-B. I did a fair amount of contact work with the British political parties. At that time the Conservatives were still in power, but it became increasingly clear by 1995 or so that Labour was going to win the next election. So a lot of our efforts were directed at getting to know senior Labour politicians better, to build relationships with them, and to brief them on U.S. thinking on key foreign policy issues. I found this fascinating. The Conservatives had of course been in power since 1979, and they were very few Labour politicians still active in 1995 who had served in the Callaghan government maybe a few who had been very junior ministers at that time. By and large the Labour leadership had been in opposition for their entire political careers. We set out to establish working ties with all the shadow ministers with portfolios related to foreign and defense policy, in the hope of being able to convince them of the rightness of U.S. views on the major issues in these fields. Mike Habib and I had several sessions with Robin Cook, the shadow foreign secretary, who had started out on the left wing of the party and had been affiliated with the unilateral disarmament movement in the 1970's, and who in 1995 still entertained serious doubts about NATO. Cook was very personable, charming, with a brilliant mind, and one of the best public speakers in the Labour ranks. He listened to us carefully and in the end I think we managed to convince him of the continuing importance of NATO and to get across to him U.S. viewpoints on the major issues of the day. We sought to cultivate many other prominent Labour parliamentarians, with the goal of learning what they thought on issues of importance to us and making a bit of a head start in trying to encourage them to see our points of view.

## Library of Congress

In the foreign policy area, I focused on the former Yugoslavia and the former Soviet Union. Bosnia took up a lot of my time, with the conflict then in full flight. For at least a year or so the U.S. tried to keep out of it, the Clinton administration taking the position that this was something for the Europeans to handle. But the Europeans after a while openly admitted that they could not resolve the issue without American help and intervention. The British pushed very strongly for us to get more deeply involved, and eventually that led to the formation of the so-called contact group of ourselves and the British and the French and the Germans to coordinate efforts to bring the conflict to an end. There were some major disagreements in the contact group, and we certainly had our differences with the British. Ironically, after pressing us to get involved the Europeans then complained loudly during the Dayton negotiations and afterwards that we were taking too active a role and were excluding them from the process. There was a lot of unhappiness in London as in Bonn and Paris over the way Holbrooke ran the show at Dayton.

I remember that during a diplomatic reception at Buckingham Palace shortly after Dayton, Pauline Neville-Jones, who was political director at the Foreign Office and had headed the British delegation at Dayton, came up to me and gave me an earful for 20 minutes on how impossible it was to work with Dick Holbrooke and how he had eviscerated the U.S.-UK relationship. Holbrooke got what he wanted but certainly ruffled a lot of feathers in the process.

*Q: Well did you find, you know the Labor movement, well Labor, the Labor party has sort of gone all over the place. They had, was it Michael Foote or something at one time, they were really, had joined the, I mean, from an American point of view, almost the left wing crazies, some of them and all, and now, I mean, they're very much a part of the establishment.*

CHAPMAN: They are the establishment.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Were you seeing a change or sort of, how were you seeing the Labor people you were seeing at that time? They were out of power.*

CHAPMAN: Right.

*Q: And, were they making adjustments to a new world or were they still ideological?*

CHAPMAN: By the mid-nineties there were new people in charge, both in the leadership ranks and in the level immediately below. Certain of them had migrated from the far left to the center. Robin Cook had been a left-winger, a prominent member of the unilateral disarmament faction in the eighties, but had swung far enough to the center so as to be able to join Tony Blair's shadow cabinet in 1994. The party generally had been moving towards the center ever since Michael Foote had been eased out in the mid-eighties. Kinnock, Foote's successor as party leader, was a leftist and a Welshman to boot, but over his long period in office he moved the party away from extreme positions, recognizing that it stood no prospect of regaining power the way it was. Kinnock came very close to defeating John Major in the 1992 election. It was not an easy thing to do to move the party towards the center given the strength of the trade union movement within the party at that time and the radical views of the trade union leadership. So as Kinnock, John Smith and Blair sought to make Labour electable one of their main objectives was to limit the strength and authority of the trade union movement within the party by changing the rules on nominations and on voting at the annual conference steps like this designed to lessen the trade union role while not causing the unions to bolt from the party for fear they might form their own more left wing party which would then hopelessly bifurcate Labour and leave the Conservatives in power for generations to come. Many of the new people coming to the fore had made their way up through the party rather than the trade unions, and they were practical politicians rather than ideologues men and women who wanted to be in power and to be able set national policy. There was an entirely new mindset in the Labour party,

## Library of Congress

strongly influenced by the example of Bill Clinton moving the Democratic party towards the center and his articulating a Third Way.

*Q: Were you there when the Dayton Accords were signed and all that?*

CHAPMAN: Yes, I was.

*Q: How did that, I mean, okay, the negotiations, everybody was bypassed in a way, I mean, in something like that you almost have to do that, I mean, it's hard for allies to negotiate I think, but anyway, how did things, did things come back together again or not?*

CHAPMAN: They did to a considerable extent. Obviously we had to cooperate on implementation of the agreement. The British hosted a Bosnia implementation conference in London in December of '95. Our approach post-Dayton was to give the Europeans as great a role as we possibly could in implementing this agreement. Christopher was not present at the London Conference, which was at the foreign minister level and well-attended by foreign ministers. Deputy Secretary Talbott, who chaired the U.S. side, left halfway through the conference.

*Q: Well, also were we pushing the, I guess it was the OSCE by that time wasn't it?*

CHAPMAN: Yes, we were bringing the OSCE into the picture at that time. My recollection is that we wanted to give the OSCE, rather than the UN or NATO, the principal role in monitoring the agreement, and to put a senior European figure in charge of Bosnian reconstruction.

*Q: How did you find the British public was viewing the United States at this time? I mean, you know, right now you have a rather anti-American strain. Was there a residue of anti-Americanism did you find among, say, the chattering class or something like that?*

CHAPMAN: It's always out there to a certain degree, in Britain as in most other European countries. But by the same token it has been my experience that when you get out of the

## Library of Congress

capital and talk to people in the small towns and village and this is true, I think, in France as well as in Britain you find that people are very friendly towards the United States. They remember the good things that we have done for them. They admire the United States for what we've achieved economically, technologically and culturally in a very broad sense, and tend to ignore the twists and turns of politics. Even amongst the chattering classes at that time there was not that much anti-Americanism or disagreement with U.S. goals and policies. It was still relatively early after the end of the Cold War. We were jointly resolving the issues that had arisen out of the end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet bloc, Yugoslavia being the main one. So I think it was an era of essentially good feelings. I think the British people felt very good towards the United States at that time.

*Q: Being in London, did you ever get the feeling that it was the Americans and the Brits against the French over various issues or not? Was there a French factor in there?*

CHAPMAN: I don't recall much of this in connection with Bosnia. The policy disputes generally ranged us against the Europeans as a whole.

*Q: Well then, who was the ambassador while you were there?*

CHAPMAN: Ray Seitz was the ambassador when I arrived, and he was succeeded by Admiral Crowe in the spring of 1994. These were two very different ambassadors. Seitz of course was a career officer who was on his third tour in London and had in fact served as DCM only a few years before being named ambassador. He knew everyone worth knowing in the capital and outside, was on top of a broad range of issues, and in effect was his own political section. Crowe was no stranger to Britain and had been close to the British military leadership. But this was his first diplomatic assignment, and he did not have same energy level or the same hands-on approach that Seitz had. He tended to focus on two or three issues, Bosnia and Northern Ireland chief among them. One obvious difference between the two was that Crowe could pick up the telephone and call the president or the vice president and get through directly; which Ray Seitz as a career



## Library of Congress

man couldn't do. My impression was that Crowe was an effective ambassador. I got along very well with him personally. He was a charming, easy-going, likeable individual, not a military man in the accustomed mold.

*Q: Well you were there when Labor took over?*

CHAPMAN: No, I left in the summer of '96. Labour took over in May of '97.

*Q: How did you find the Conservative party? I mean, were they, do you feel we were close to them or not?*

CHAPMAN: Oh yes. We had been working with them for many, many years. Since they were the party in power, only the ambassador had access to ministers; the rest of us had to be content with talking to Members of Parliament and officials at party headquarters. But they were ready interlocutors, particularly so on the margins of the annual party conferences, where things were more informal and the bar was the usual venue.

*Q: Well then you left there in '96?*

CHAPMAN: '96, yes.

*Q: Where'd you go then?*

CHAPMAN: I came back to Washington and took an assignment as an office director in the Bureau of International Organizations.

*Q: You did that from when to when?*

CHAPMAN: From '96 to '98. The key issue that the bureau faced at that time was finding some way to repay our debts to the United Nations, which had grown to almost unmanageable proportions. The Republicans, who controlled Congress, were very reluctant to shell out money to an organization that a lot of them didn't like and that they

## Library of Congress

believed was ineffectual and in fact acting counter to U.S. interests. They were ready to appropriate funds to pay off some of our debts, but only in return for far-reaching reforms at the UN. The Administration was given the task of persuading the other members of the UN to accept these changes, which was a real uphill battle. Every time we met with representatives of country X to argue for reform, we were met with the refrain that the U.S. should first pay off its debts in full, on time and without conditions. This came to be known colloquially as the IFOTWOC line. Basically the issue did not get resolved until Holbrook became our ambassador to the UN and was able to convince the Congress to appropriate enough money to pay off most of our debts.

*Q: What part of the pie did you have?*

CHAPMAN: I headed the Office of Policy, Public and Congressional Affairs, so the assistant secretary was looking to me to rebuild IO bureau contacts on the Hill and do a lot of the basic spadework on the arrears issue. I found that Congressional staffers were willing to meet and talk, chiefly the Democrats who were seeking to whittle down some of the Republicans' extravagant demands. But unfortunately our Bureau of Congressional Affairs claimed they had a monopoly on contacts with the Hill and nixed all my efforts to meet staffers and press the Administration's viewpoint. This was nonsensical given that paying off the arrears was a major Administration goal and that the Congressional Affairs Bureau simply didn't have the people to devote to this effort, whereas we in IO did. This monopoly practice was later terminated by Secretary Powell, but obviously not soon enough to help me out. We did have a few carefully-orchestrated meetings with staffers on the Hill on the arrears issue, under Congressional Affairs supervision, but not nearly enough to be able to make any headway on the problem.

*Q: And also I think \_\_\_\_\_ been in office up in Capital Hill now, the military's had an office.*

## Library of Congress

CHAPMAN: Yes. I'm not sure exactly what that does. I think a lot of it initially had to do with the practical business of coordinating congressional travel overseas. And there is a consular component to it as well, I think.

*Q: Well did you sort of feel that the brunt of, it seemed that Congress turned almost rabid against Clinton. I mean, you know, the Republicans, I'd never seen it so bad. Well, they tried to impeach him over what amounted to a very minor matter, I mean, this was an excuse to get rid of a president. Did you find it difficult to talk to people, you know, kind of the movers and shakers within the Republican party?*

CHAPMAN: There were not too many Republicans whom, at least at the staff level, I had access to or maintained contacts with. I can think of a few individuals on the staffs of moderate Republican senators and congressmen. The Democrats were largely receptive to our pitch. A lot of them supported substantial reform of the UN organization but were nonetheless cognizant of our obligation to pay our dues. The Democrats accepted the notion that the UN was a useful institution, without making it out to be more than it was.

*Q: This is tape four, side one with Geoff Chapman. Yes.*

CHAPMAN: So to the extent that we in the IO bureau were able to have direct contacts with the Hill on the arrears issue we were dealing mostly with Democrats. The assistant secretary, Princeton Lyman, was able to meet with some of the moderates on the Republican side, such as Jim Leach in the House and Gordon Smith in the Senate. But I don't recall any sessions with major leadership figures on the Republican side, either in the House or the Senate. Jesse Helms was, to say the least, a strong critic of the UN and well set in his views; there probably wasn't much we could have done to convince him to change course. I don't see the Republican stance on this issue as particularly directed against the Clinton presidency. It stemmed from their jaundiced view of the United Nations, that it didn't really serve American purposes and wasn't worth our pouring money into.

## Library of Congress

During this time that I was in IO Bolton was-

*Q: John Bolton.*

CHAPMAN: John Bolton, right. He had been IO assistant secretary in the George H.W. Bush administration, so he was out of government at this time. The views that he was articulating on the UN were basically consonant with those of many Republicans in Congress, namely that it was a do-nothing institution that we could just as easily do without. But what's interesting about this conservative critique is that, while maintaining that the UN was a powerless institution, it let stand accusations on the right-wing fringe that the UN was plotting to take over the United States and eradicate our sovereignty, and that the Democrats were prepared to abdicate our sovereignty. Plenty of conservative congressmen accepted the notion that placing sites in the U.S. on the World Heritage site register amounted to recognizing UN sovereignty over that site, and they did little to counter fanciful tales of black helicopters filled with UN shock troops threatening American communities.

*Q: Black helicopters?*

CHAPMAN: Black helicopters, supposedly UN helicopters spying on and threatening people in the U.S. We'd get constituent letters making such claims forwarded to us from the Congress, and we'd have to respond with a straight face.

*Q: Well, you did that until when?*

CHAPMAN: Until '98.

*Q: And then what?*

CHAPMAN: Then I spent three years in the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs, quite a departure for me. I realized at this point that for a variety of reasons I wasn't going

## Library of Congress

to stay around much longer in the Foreign Service, and was looking for something in the way of a new and different experience. So I went into the EB Bureau and worked in telecommunications policy for three years. I was dealing with counterparts in what was for me an entirely new set of agencies, principally the Department of Commerce and the FCC (Federal Communications Commission), plus the economic policy side of the NSC. I honestly don't think I achieved anything of great significance in those three years, but it was a fascinating intellectual challenge in many ways. One had to absorb a certain amount of the technology to be a player in the policy arena. I certainly learned more than I ever thought I would about wireless technologies.

One the initiatives I was involved with was an effort to expand use of the Internet in the developing world. This was spearheaded largely by Ira Magaziner, who was the health guru at the beginning of the first Clinton term and then turned to Internet policy issues in the second term. The Administration made a determined push to expand Internet use in the U.S., but allied with this was a campaign to promote its use in the poorer countries of the world essentially as a development tool. The focus here was largely on Africa, but also to some extent Asia and Latin America, with projects to get people hooked up to the Internet, to make them Internet literate, and to involve them in a rudimentary e-commerce as a way of pulling themselves out of poverty. We were never able to secure any additional money for the program; it was a matter of pulling money out of existing pots and trying to direct it more at endeavors of this kind.

*Q: Well was there suspicion on the part of many countries that didn't have it that the Internet was a vast American conspiracy or not?*

CHAPMAN: I don't recall any such attitudes among the developing countries. African governments and peoples were only too happy to receive assistance in building out their domestic telecommunications networks and to get exposure to the technological know-how. It may sound a little farfetched to connect isolated African villages up to the Internet, to make the villagers computer literate, and to introduce them to the wonders

## Library of Congress

of e-commerce; but this did work, at least on a small scale. There was certainly a lot of resentment in the developed world over U.S. control of the Internet the feeling being that this should be subject to international control but I did not have any sense that people in the developing world saw the Internet as a big American conspiracy out to run their lives for them.

*Q: Did you have a feeling while you were working, particularly on something like the Internet, that you were, the point of the spear of a new revolution that was coming around?*

CHAPMAN: I think we felt we were on the cutting edge, in terms of trying to expand Internet use globally and make it a tool for development. We were also peripherally involved in the effort to set up a new structure for managing the Internet, shifting this task from a wholly American company under license from the Department of Commerce to a new private international entity for which there was effectively no precedent. The Europeans and others wanted some international governmental oversight of this new entity, but the Clinton administration pressed to have it completely in private hands. There was a certain amount of opposition in U.S. business circles to handing over control of the Internet to an international entity, on the grounds that we had built it and it was working fine as it was. But certainly people in the Clinton administration recognized that ultimately some form of internationalization was inevitable, and that both the U.S. Government and the U.S. generally would have to cede unilateral policy control.

*Q: Well did these issues, I mean, did you get involved in these issues very much? Who's running it and all that?*

CHAPMAN: That was the key issue for the Europeans and the Asians, to try to end the American monopoly on running the Internet, on setting what the policy would be and how it would develop in future years.

## Library of Congress

*Q: Did the French raise any objections about English being the dominant language in the Internet at that time? They are now.*

CHAPMAN: I don't recall any at that time.

*Q: I think it's just one of those, Chirac I think has raised it recently.*

CHAPMAN: Reminiscent of King Canute ordering the tide not to come in any further. I don't see how anyone could hope to prevent the spread of the English language as the lingua franca of the Internet.

*Q: Well you did this until what? '99 about?*

CHAPMAN: No, I was in this assignment for three years, until 2000.

*Q: And then what happened?*

CHAPMAN: I had one final year in the Human Resources Bureau as a counselor to Senior Foreign Service personnel.

*Q: How'd you find that?*

CHAPMAN: Another new and different experience for me. It was enjoyable, but I think that one year was enough for me.

*Q: Well then, and then you retired?*

CHAPMAN: I retired in September of '02.

*Q: Well great. Well it's been very interesting. I want to thank you.*

CHAPMAN: It's been my pleasure.

Library of Congress

End of interview